

WHY NAZI ?

*"Not to accuse, nor to
defend, but to explain."*

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PREFACE

This book represents a dispassionate attempt to explain to the general reader the significance of the German upheaval of 1933, and some of the causes leading up to it. The extreme suddenness with which the complete reversal of the political order took place and the revolutionary incidents which it produced have tended to obscure the essential features of the National movement. All that I have attempted in the following pages is to restore the picture to its true perspective by presenting it against its historical, political, and intellectual background. Not to accuse, nor to defend, but to explain, is my purpose.

We are still too near to the events to see clearly where they are leading; but the possibilities involved are so immense, and they touch so vitally upon the life of all western nations, that no one can afford to ignore them on the ground of personal or political

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objections. What Germany is doing is not only of tremendous importance to the peace of the world: it is also an experiment which ought to be seriously studied by all those who feel in their hearts that civilization has reached a point at which some change of direction is inevitable.

Although this study is principally concerned with the present and future of Germany, it will be appreciated that the political and economic history of the post-war years has to be briefly summarized in order to convey the atmosphere in which the National Socialist movement became the pivot of German politics. The British reader will realize that whereas in this country peaceful and normal conditions returned quite soon after the Armistice, the German people had to live for a much longer period in circumstances of starvation, nervous strain, and insecurity not very far removed from the conditions of war. Since 1918 the Germans have experienced several revolutions, foreign aggression in the East, foreign occupation of their territory, the complete destruction of their currency, and an industrial crisis of unexampled severity and persistence. Such a nation cannot altogether be measured by the same standards as its neighbours.

I have endeavoured to show in the following

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analysis that the German revolution of 1933 was, to a certain extent, the inevitable result of the sufferings of the German people during the fourteen years following the Armistice. If, however, some move of national assertion was inevitable, it was not inevitable that it should take the form of a National Socialist dictatorship. For that, Adolf Hitler, the creator and leader of the National Socialist movement, was solely responsible. His personality, therefore, looms large in the pages of this book. The future of Germany is now inextricably entwined with the character of this man. After building up the most powerful mass-movement Germany has seen since the hey-day of socialism; after keeping his strangely mixed party together for fourteen years through many crises and internal conflicts; after leading his organization to power and establishing for it a position of supreme control over the national life of his country, Adolf Hitler will either become a statesman and go down to history as the saviour of the German nation, or he will perish, dragging Germany with him to utter ruin.

Germany is in revolt. She is not merely in revolt against the humiliation caused by the Treaty of Versailles and its interpretation during the last fourteen years; but in revolt also against the despair,

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resignation, and inertia with which the western world is watching its civilization crumble. The German people, far beyond the confines of the National Socialist movement, are trying to work out an experiment in national planning which they believe will reveal a way out of the present world deadlock. It may be that their idealism will be defeated by the rigour of logical consistency and the fog of mysticism which are the curse of many German enterprises. For such prediction it is too early in the day. If, on the other hand, Germany should succeed in establishing a new type of social and economic order which may help to overcome the state of poverty in the midst of plenty, the end might justify the means.

In drawing attention to the larger and more fundamental tendencies behind the daily events of German politics, the author should not for one moment be understood to condone the violence with which the present German régime has established its power. It was entirely unnecessary for the purpose of national rehabilitation, or even for social reconstruction, to whip up the hatred of a suffering population against the Jewish race; and the persecution to which members of that race are subject under the Hitler government is indeed regarded

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with profound abhorrence by a large majority of the German people. The suppression of the political parties, the confiscation of their property, and the drastic measures against all members of the former opposition, are more definitely political measures and, although extreme, they are somehow inherent in the scheme which Hitler and his followers have in mind. But if these events are here discussed with a certain detachment, the author would profoundly regret it if it were thought that he did not feel the deepest possible sympathy for all those to whom these actions have meant personal suffering.

THE MARCH ON BERLIN

In the evening of January 30th, 1933, a torchlight procession was held in Berlin to celebrate the appointment of Adolf Hitler, the leader of the National Socialist Party, as Chancellor of the German Reich. Hitler's brown-shirted Storm Troops, together with the grey-clad Stahlhelm men, marched along the Wilhelmstrasse with banners and bands, while Hitler stood by the open window of his new residence, a beam of floodlight directed on his youthful figure. On the balcony of the presidential palace next door was Field-Marshal Paul von Hindenburg, second President of the German Republic. As the mass of uniformed youths marched past him, the old soldier, who had served his country with great distinction under political conditions more than strange to his feelings, saw his highest ambitions fulfilled. The proud youth of the country, the "national", conservative, soldierly people had

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once again come to the fore, after fourteen years of struggle. Germany's face had again become strong-willed and proud, as in the great days of August 1914.

The President received his share of the cheering, but it was Hitler's name that was on the lips of the crowd. "Marshal Hindenburg", said the official broadcast *rapporteur* that night, "has to-day endeared himself to the people by investing Adolf Hitler with the mantle of power."

Boundless enthusiasm filled the mass of happy people who crowded the streets of the capital. Captain Goering, Hitler's closest collaborator, described the scenes in Berlin as the most magnificent demonstration of the German spirit since 1914; and so it seemed to be. It was not exactly the same crowd as on that distant day of the declaration of war; many of those who marched past Hitler and Hindenburg had been schoolboys when the war broke out. But what had happened to Germany on that summer day of nineteen years ago transcended personal experience. For the first time in history the German people felt that they had a common purpose, that they could speak with one voice and act as one man—that they were a nation.

The foundations of real National unity were laid in

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four years of trench-warfare and starvation; but the "front spirit", though frequently quoted, did not reach its full force until it was galvanized in another tempest of patriotic emotion by a man who had compelled enormous sections of the people to recognize him as their leader. Now the cheering crowds dimly felt that the promise of 1914 had been fulfilled. The German nation—so countless political speakers were saying that night—had at last really come into being.

All over Germany, in cities and towns, in villages and hamlets, this spirit expressed itself in a great wave of thankfulness. Torchlight processions were held in all parts of the country; houses were beflagged and streets overcrowded; ex-soldiers donned their war medals, and women held up their small children that they might see the great battalions of the new Germany.

But not every window was lit, nor every house beflagged with the Imperial colours of black, white, and red, or the red Hitler flag with the swastika. When enthusiastic people said that at last all Germany was united in a great national awakening, they were forgetting that nearly one half of the population watched the advent of Hitler with grave doubts and forebodings. Up to the very day of the

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change of government, the conflict of political parties had been gaining strength, and fanatical hatred between the rival armies of National Socialists and Communists had burned throughout Germany. Adolf Hitler and his lieutenants had never yet made a public speech without vowing to destroy, root and branch, all adherents of "Marxism", socialists as well as communists. They had built up their movement almost exclusively on the programme of the extermination of "Marxists" and Jews.

Six hundred thousand German Jews, and twelve million working men who had until recently given their votes to either the Socialist or the Communist Parties, were afraid that those threats would now be fulfilled in a wave of terror. They stayed at home, turned off the radio and sat thinking gloomily.

Many indeed expected the workers to rise in revolt against the newly formed government before it had firmly gripped the reins of power. Hitler's party could claim the support of rather more than forty per cent of the electorate. But just as many people were strongly opposed to them. For a time the scales had seemed to hang evenly between the opposing extremes. It is one of the mysteries of German politics that Hitler was, in fact, given a political walk-over; that the opposition collapsed without the

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slightest attempt at resistance. An explanation of this astounding rout, though difficult, has to be essayed.

There is no doubt that millions of workmen were awaiting a call from their leaders to leave the factories for a general strike. But the call did not come. The labour leaders considered the odds too strong against them, and they did not desire to be responsible for a civil war, which they feared would break out when the "Nazi"¹ and Stahlhelm armies, perhaps supported by the regular army, should combine to suppress the strike.

It is true that the Labour movement also had two strong "private armies" at its disposal: the Republican "Iron Front" and the Communist "Red Front". Moreover, the Prussian police still had labour sympathies and might have responded to a strong lead from the left. Nor was the attitude of the Reichswehr at all certain, since General von Schleicher, its nominal chief, had been rather shabbily treated by Hitler and von Papen when they negotiated for his overthrow behind his back.

Some people remembered how in 1920, when Wolfgang Kapp attempted to establish a military dictatorship in Berlin, the workmen had quietly

¹ "Nazi" is the popular abbreviation for National Socialist.

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walked out of the factories and railway sheds without waiting for the call from their leaders who were sitting in unending conference. Then the folded arms of the workers had strangled the insurrection within a week. How was it that not the slightest sign of resistance met the arrival of Hitler, though the workers were thoroughly aware of the dangers which threatened them?

The Labour Leaders had already played their last card, and missed their last trick, when in June, 1932 Herr von Papen—who had been made Chancellor by President Hindenburg without either parliamentary or popular support—summarily “dismissed” the Prussian cabinet of the socialists Braun and Severing. After a weak show of defiance they had allowed themselves to be “forcibly removed” from their posts. *Then* Labour might have made a stand with some hope of success. The Government was exceedingly unpopular; the Socialist organizations were intact; the legality of the dismissal had been fiercely contested. The Prussian police was still under socialist control—and though the Labour forces were split by rivalry, it is just possible that a determined stand might have succeeded. No resistance was offered then; *now* it would have been a thousand times more difficult.

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The complete collapse of the opposition was not only a question of high politics, but one of faith. The workers themselves had no spirit left for a desperate fight. Ten years of economic crisis with its daily struggle for employment and a bare livelihood had unnerved them. Seven million unemployed were waiting at the factory gates to take the place of strikers. There is a limit to the supremacy of spirit over hunger. Moreover, the spirit itself, the Socialist faith, had not stood up well to the trials of economic depression and national humiliation. The doctrines of Karl Marx had been a powerful weapon for Labour in its fight against an overpowering array of established institutions. When at the end of the war Labour was installed in power, a completely different task was thrust into its hands.

Labour had to reconstruct an economic system devastated by the war; it had to gather, strengthen, and build up anew the dissolving elements of a defeated nation. It had to resist foreign oppression and to prevent attempts to carve out pieces from the sick body of the country. It had to fight continuously against the forces of revolutionary communism directed by Soviet Russia. The Labour leaders had done their best to meet novel tasks, but they had not been able to evolve a new faith appropriate to their

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changed position. And for class warfare, the mainstay of the Marxist doctrine, there was neither time nor even a clearly visible opponent left at the end of the war.

As time went on, the urge of national preservation and rehabilitation which swept over the country deeply touched the Socialist masses. They hated the Fascist forces which from insignificant beginnings had grown into a nation-wide movement; but their hands were paralysed by their own patriotism. They would not destroy a government which—whatever it might do to *them*—would at least make Germany strong amongst the powers of the world. A portion of their sympathy—a portion which the internationalism of the socialist movement could not suppress—was bound to go to any Government that could say to the world: "We will not stand oppression any longer!" So they waited, torn between hope and fear.

When the glare of militant enthusiasm had faded out with the floodlight and the torches of the victory parade, it seemed for a short time as if nothing revolutionary was going to happen. Adolf Hitler, the powerful leader of the National Socialist mass-movement, occupied the seat of Bismarck; but he

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was as yet "in office" rather than "in power". The Junkers, industrialists, and generals, it appeared, were wielding the real power, while Hitler went on speaking to vast meetings about the advent of a new era.

It was whispered that much of the excitement had been mere showmanship. The march of the Nazis and Steel Helmets on Berlin, after all, was not in the least like Mussolini's march on Rome. The intrigue which had overthrown General von Schleicher and installed Hitler in his stead had been contrived not by him but by other forces in their own interests. Look at the composition of the new cabinet! The conservative Baron von Papen, whose mediation had brought about the change of Government, was Vice-Chancellor and Commissioner for Prussia—a position of no small power. He publicly described the Hitler experiment as a *détour* leading eventually to the "authoritative State" which was his ideal and that of his class. Herr Hugenberg, an experienced financier of the pre-war Prussian type, was the economic dictator. The ministries of foreign affairs, defence and finance were also in the hands of proved conservatives. And President von Hindenburg had made it a condition of Hitler's appointment that the Nazi-Nationalist Coalition should not be broken or

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changed afterwards. In the last resort there was the Stahlhelm, that powerful association of ex-soldiers whose leader, Captain Seldte, was also given a place in the cabinet.

It was Captain Goering, the National Socialist speaker of the Reichstag, who took the first steps to raise the Nazis out of their submersion within the National Coalition. Although he belonged to the Reich government merely as head of the non-existent ministry of aviation, he was also assistant Commissioner for Prussia. Legally he was subordinate to the chief Commissioner, Herr von Papen, but in reality he assumed full control and took over the reins of administration.

Captain Goering knew his own mind, and he set to work without delay. He began a systematic purge of the Prussian administration, making a clean sweep of every official who was even faintly suspected of communist or socialist sympathies. Police presidents and officers, functionaries in influential positions, Mayors, City Councillors, in fact all who could influence National opinion by executive action, were removed without hesitation and in their places were installed firm supporters of the new régime. The rank and file of the police were impressed with the imperative need for crushing

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socialist and communist activities with utter ruthlessness. When Captain Goering was charged with encouraging the police to shoot at inoffensive crowds, he promptly admitted the charge and took on full responsibility, saying: "All bullets are my bullets."

The most important step to full Nazi power in Prussia was taken when Captain Goering decreed that a force of "auxiliary police" was to be created from the ranks of the Nazi Storm Troops and Steel Helmets. The police, hitherto regarded as mainly socialist in tendency, received their new colleagues with good humour. Regular and "auxiliary" police were soon to be seen walking together on common duty. For the suppression of the remnants of opposition, this measure turned out to be decisive. Less widely known, but hardly less important, was the "reorganization of the political police", in other words, the creation of a new secret police force under the direction of Captain Goering.

Meanwhile, Chancellor Hitler was thoroughly conscious of his ambiguous position, and was far from comfortable in it. While he enjoyed enormous and daily increasing support in the country, he had next to nothing to say in his own Cabinet. He was trapped—or so the advisers of President Hinden-

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burg smugly imagined—and his only way out was what Bismarck had once called “the escape into publicity”. Papen and Hugenberg wished to close down Parliament and rule indefinitely as a “presidential government” by way of decrees. This would have prolonged almost to permanency the term of “imprisonment” for Hitler; but the Chancellor side-stepped this plan and secured a General Election by persuading the President that a Parliamentary majority, to which the old Field-Marshal, out of loyalty to his oath on the constitution, attached great importance, was still feasible—either in the present Reichstag by winning over the Catholic Centre Party, or by holding another election. He asked the Centre Party to give the Government plenary powers for nine months, but omitted to offer them any share of official appointments. When the Centre, naturally, refused, Hitler requested and obtained from the President an order for the dissolution of the Reichstag; on condition, however, that whatever the result of the election the composition of the Government was not to be changed.

Once the election campaign started, Hitler was again in his element, and as he discarded the unaccustomed morning coat for his old Nazi uniform, the embarrassment of the strange company fell from

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him. He promised his supporters, in a shower of speeches, that immediately after the election he would take charge in earnest. Whatever the result of the Poll, he would no longer be fettered.

The cue was taken. Goering redoubled his efforts to bring the Prussian administration completely under Nazi control. He had newspapers suppressed for publishing a report that Stock Exchange prices had slumped; and he prohibited the entire Socialist press for publishing the Social-Democratic election manifesto. The communist newspapers were suppressed without even that much pretence of assigning any "grounds". The organization of that most powerful weapon of modern political warfare—the persuasion of the press and the creation of opinion—was not forgotten. Dr. Goebbels, the brilliant editor of the Berlin Nazi organ *Angriff*, was at that stage appointed Reich Minister for a newly created portfolio of propaganda. He had been Hitler's propaganda chief for years and had—as the party's best speaker after the leader himself—contributed largely to the success of the Nazi movement. He formed at once a proper department with a large staff, and took over officially the "co-ordination" of public opinion. The censorship of the press, and the management of broadcasting and the cinema came under

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his control. It was on his advice that Hitler went by air to East Prussia on the eve of the election, and Dr. Goebbels himself broadcast a fiery speech from the air whilst flying over the Polish "Corridor"!

Six days before the date fixed for the election an event took place which changed literally overnight the entire political situation. The Reichstag building, which in many ways had come to symbolize the power of German democracy even during the Empire, and which during the last thirteen years had housed the Parliament of the nation, was in flames. It is doubtful whether we shall ever know the true origin of this appalling tragedy; but there is no doubt that it was an act of incendiarism. It is very difficult to believe—as it has been suggested—that it was a deliberate move in party tactics: or, as it has been officially alleged, that the communists were so foolish as to forget the possible effects of an action of this nature, at a time when the Government had unprecedented power to punish the responsible party. But whatever the origin and whoever the miscreant, the effect of the fire was stupendous. Even as the flames were lighting up the winter sky, Hitler, Goering and Goebbels stood in front of the blazing structure and realized that a unique opportunity had been given them to mobilize to their side

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all the elements of the nation who saw in this wanton incendiarism a threat to ordered society. As Hitler himself said: "The fire was a sign from heaven." Indeed it almost amounted to that, for it served both as a manifesto and as a warning.

In spite of the renewed enthusiasm of the National Socialist masses when their leader was made Chancellor, there had already been signs of disappointment as it became obvious that the party was in no way nearer to its goal of a complete transformation of the economic and social order. As the election campaign progressed, it appeared that the hold of the opposition on the country had not been broken. It was more and more doubtful whether the Nazis would secure the absolute majority which would enable Hitler to free himself from the vice-like grip of the Nationalists. The Reichstag fire provided Hitler with a marvellous opportunity to show to the country from what horrors it was being saved by the National Socialists.

A few days before the fire, the Prussian government raided the *Karl Liebknecht* House, the official headquarters of the Communist Party. The search is said to have resulted in the discovery of a large mass of seditious literature, including plans for a great campaign of sabotage and incendiarism. This

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discovery was now announced to the public, and it was indicated that the Reichstag fire was but the prelude to the great campaign which had been carefully prepared by the communists. At the same time, the Socialists were also indicted for complicity in the crime. Van der Lübbe, a young Dutchman who, with his membership card of the Dutch Communist Party, was discovered in the building at the time of the fire, was said to have confessed his crime and his association with both the Communist and Social-Democratic Parties in Germany. "Through this confession," announced the official press agency, "the united Communist-Socialist front has become a palpable fact."

In the course of investigation it was stated several weeks afterwards that the Socialists had been entirely cleared from the charge of conspiracy in the crime, and it became increasingly probable that the young Dutchman's association with the German Communist Party was merely casual.

The Communists were, however, immediately declared "traitors to the people", and those of their leaders who had not escaped into foreign countries were at once arrested. Their meetings were prohibited and their organizations placed under a ban. The entire Labour press, consisting of more than

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two hundred daily newspapers, was suppressed until further notice. During the last few days of the election campaign, innumerable Nazi speakers denounced the "Marxists" as murderers and incendiaries. The impression on the electorate was remarkable. The people had already tasted the horrors of civil war, and if Hitler had rescued them from a recurrence of red terror—well and good. Hitler's stock rose. Parliamentary majority lay in his reach.

But now he was not content with fighting for a majority. He desired complete power; an undivided mandate. Again it was Goering who found the means. Under cover of suppressing the Red danger, the Prussian Nazi forces established an iron rule over the entire population. Within a few days of the Reichstag fire, Prussia was in the grip of a ruthless military régime. Stage by stage this system was extended to the other German states. Those clauses of the constitution guaranteeing the personal liberty of the citizen were suspended by Presidential decree. Large internment camps were formed in which many thousands of communists, socialists, and pacifist intellectuals were confined without trial. Amongst them were many members of diets, party functionaries, and journalists. The opposition was held in constant terror by a series of raids carried out by the

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brown-shirted storm troops who were practically free from official interference.

In spite of all, the election resulted in only a partial success from the Nazi point of view. They had not secured an absolute majority. Out of six hundred and forty-seven seats, Hitler obtained only two hundred and eighty-eight. The position of the other parties was as follows: Nationalist fifty-two; other Government Parties nine; Catholic Centre Party ninety-two; Social Democrats one hundred and twenty-five; Communists eighty-one. Compared with the previous elections of November 6th, 1932, the Nazis had gained eighty-eight seats, the Nationalists one, the Catholic Centre four; while the Socialists had lost one seat and the Communists nineteen. The Government Parties thus held a total of three hundred and forty-nine seats out of six hundred and forty-seven. The majority of twenty-five was considerably increased by the fact that the Communist deputies were not invited to attend the new Reichstag—being in most cases detained either in prison or in one of the “concentration camps”. But the two-thirds majority necessary for the temporary elimination of parliament depended on the votes of the Catholic Centre Party.

The opening of the new Reichstag session was

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preceded by a service in the Garrison Church at Potsdam over the grave of King Frederick II, the founder of modern Prussia. The occasion was used for a demonstration of patriotic fervour such as had never been seen in Germany during the drab days of the democratic Republic. In the production of propaganda shows, the Nazis proved to be vastly superior to their predecessors, and the effect of this could not be easily overrated.

The Session itself was held the same evening in the Kroll Opera House, and after a last protest from the Socialist ranks the Chancellor obtained a two-thirds majority for the Empowering Bill giving the Government complete and absolute power to rule without parliamentary control. The Centre Party, after much hesitation, voted for the Government—"not wishing to obstruct the work of National renewal".

It was a different Adolf Hitler who arrived at the Wilhelmstrasse after the adjournment of the Reichstag. From that moment he was master, and the Nationalist Ministers receded ever more into the background. It was now decreed that public authorities all over Germany should be "politically co-ordinated". This meant that all governments and councils had to be reconstituted on the model of the

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central government—Nazis and Nationalists only.

There was a show of resistance in the southern states who had always been jealous of their independence; there was even a half-hearted attempt at establishing a monarchy in Bavaria under the immensely popular crown-prince Rupprecht of Wittelsbach; but the Nazis were too quick for their opponents. While the southern statesmen travelled or telegraphed to Berlin in order to make offers or threats, Nazi Commissioners arrived by air in the state capitals, gathered the local party's Storm Troops, dismissed the governments and issued orders to the police. Not a hand was raised in resistance. Within a few days the conquest of the southern states, and indeed of the whole of Germany, was complete; and the new governments were in all cases under Nazi leadership.

It remained to establish "political co-ordination" throughout the civil service, municipal councils, economic and social organizations. It was at this stage that the term "politically undesirable", originally aimed at "Marxists", was officially extended to all Jews, as well as to persons with pacifist or liberal leanings. All these were now removed from any posts of potential influence which they might hold. Judges and barristers of Jewish faith or

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descent were ejected from the courts and afterwards retired or debarred. Doctors were dismissed from hospital posts and deprived of the right to treat panel cases, which to-day amount to eighty per cent of all medical practice. Anyone having one grandparent of Jewish extraction or an undesirable political "past" was disqualified by decree for any appointment in the civil service. University professors, teachers and artists of Jewish descent or of "left" inclinations were also removed, amongst them undoubted authorities in their field, whose names, as that of Einstein, were known all over the world. A boycott of Jewish shops was organized, but it had to be stopped after the first day owing to the economic confusion resulting from it.

Nazis were installed as heads of municipal administrations; Nazis took over the management of every association and union, private or semi-public; Nazis assumed control of sport clubs and theatres, stock exchanges and workers' councils. Absolute obedience to Berlin headquarters was demanded of the National Socialist commissioners thus installed, and on the whole this was readily given, though the rapid change-over led for a time to serious acts of violence.

Within a month of the election, Hitler was the

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unquestioned master of Germany. He proceeded to introduce a new constitution giving absolute control to the head of the Central Government. He compelled the Stahlhelm, that conservative union of patriotic ex-soldiers, to join the Nazi ranks. He appointed Captain Goering Prime Minister of Prussia in the face of the President, who had promised this much-coveted position to Herr von Papen. The Nationalists receded into the background, waiting with fading hope that tempers would cool and reason reappear. Meanwhile more and more Germans gave up resistance to a government which had obviously come to stay, and to stay without sharing power. When at the end of three months Hitler struck the final blow against the opposition by suppressing the Socialist trade unions and seizing their funds, it had become indisputable that in another general election at least sixty per cent of the electorate would have voted for Hitler.

"The first stage of the revolution is over," said Hitler himself. "Now for the second phase!"

II

AN OUTLAWED COUNTRY

WE have now to turn back the pages of history over fourteen years in order to explain how the upheaval of 1933 was rendered possible. "National Socialism was born at Versailles", is a slogan of Nazi speakers which contains almost as much truth as meets the eye.

First of all one has to grasp the full emotional meaning of the fact that from the day of the Armistice Germany was an outlawed country. The Armistice had been concluded by Germany on the basis of President Wilson's fourteen points, which were entirely disregarded in the peace negotiations that followed. The Peace Treaty itself, drawn up without German collaboration, was put before the Germans to sign under the threat of renewed hostilities. Even at that early stage there was in Germany a wave of popular feeling calling for the refusal of the signature. In fact, the entire German delegation at

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Versailles, consisting of two hundred men, returned to Weimar on the 16th of June, 1919, to recommend *unanimously* to their government that Germany should refuse to accept the peace conditions. Only after a prolonged struggle was a majority for acceptance found in the National Assembly. "In order to prevent the occupation of Germany, with its inevitable results: the dissolution of the Reich, and the triumph of bolshevism," the Republican Government decided to sign under protest the Treaty of Versailles. They were never forgiven for this act by large sections of the people.

The Treaty itself, conceived in an atmosphere of fanatical hatred and doctrinaire salvationism, was ideally calculated to arouse the maximum of grievances without securing even the minimum of justice. It cut away arbitrarily large pieces of German territory; it dogmatically declared Germany solely responsible for the war; it annexed German colonies on the plea of maladministration; it saddled Germany with a fantastic burden of Reparations which seemed to sentence three generations of Germans to hard labour for the benefit of the victors; it disarmed Germany completely, with only a vague promise of general disarmament to follow; in short, the Treaty of Versailles branded the proud German nation

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with a stigma which it could not be expected to bear indefinitely without revolt. If the Gallery of Mirrors, which had forty-eight years before witnessed the birth of the German Empire, could only have reflected the soul of the German plenipotentiaries as it reflected the triumphant smiles of the Allied statesmen, then the world would have realized that they were sowing the seeds of a militant nationalism in Germany.

Nor was that all. The economic blockade, which had been the most powerful weapon in the hands of the Allies during the war, and which had reduced the German people to a terrible state of starvation, was not raised after the Armistice, nor even immediately after the signing of the Peace Treaty. Thus military ruthlessness became wanton and inhuman cruelty. The soldiers were the first to recognize this difference. Early in 1919, General Plumer, the British Commander-in-Chief in the Rhineland, telegraphed to the Supreme Council in Paris that he could not maintain the discipline of his troops unless the sufferings of the starving population were relieved by allowing food to be imported into the country. Post-war blockade was responsible for untold misery, starvation and death, and could never be quite forgotten, if only because the young men of to-day

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feel in their bones the after-effects of starvation during the years of their adolescence.

The temporary occupation of the Rhineland as a guarantee of German disarmament was, on the whole, realized by the Germans to be a reasonable precaution. The sensible, tactful way in which it was carried out by the British and, for a time, the American sections of the occupying army, proved that it need not have given rise to lasting resentment. That it did provoke the fiercest possible resentment throughout the German population was almost entirely due to the unnecessarily vindictive way in which the French and Belgians interpreted their rights. The presence of coloured French troops in the Rhineland was bitterly felt to be insult added to injury. Countless incidents in which French troops rubbed in their utter contempt of the defeated foe resulted in a general feeling of humiliation. To recall only one of the relatively minor points of this pin-prick policy: the knocking off of hats of German civilians who were ordered to remove them to every foreign officer was a favourite pastime of the French and Belgian subalterns as late as 1924. Many more serious instances intensified the German feeling of utter helplessness; such as when men who were trying to defend their wives, sisters,

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or daughters against assaults of French soldiers, were shot down without hesitation, and subsequent protests answered with the imprisonment of the complainant.

A nation which can be provoked in this manner with impunity, it was felt, is dishonoured and outlawed. Gradually the sense of shame was changing to a vow of defiance: one day Germany would again be honourable, her sovereignty respected, her word listened to in the councils of the nations.

The French Government, not satisfied that Germany was for ever powerless, wanted to build a safe wall between the two countries. The idea of an independent buffer-state along the Rhine suggested itself almost naturally. It had the added advantage of bringing enormous natural resources under the control of French industry. The French occupying army was used as an instrument to create an autonomous Rhineland Republic. The attempt was stoutly resisted by the Rhinelanders themselves, and it led to much bloodshed and disturbance. But although it soon became clear to the French Government that the project was hopeless, it was nevertheless followed up to the point of installing a "government" of hired bravos, criminals, and cut-throats, under the protection of French bayonets. The

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fictitious state was short-lived and the members of the so-called "Rhineland Government" were either killed or forced to disappear; but the assault on German sovereignty has never been forgotten.

During the first few years after the war, the vast majority of Germans were eager for an international understanding. There was a strong reaction from the mood of the war, a reaction born in the trenches and not confined to Germany. If at that time Germany had been encouraged instead of humiliated by the Allies, and if the German government had been assured of the possibility of early relaxation of the unbearable burden of Reparations and other essentially unjust provisions, as soon as the Allies were satisfied with the *bona fides* of the new German régime, then a lasting settlement of European conflicts would have been possible, even within the framework of the Treaty of Versailles. The mood of Germany was pacifist and democratic. The natural revulsion from the miseries of the war had given rise to a general sense of idealism in international relations. In particular, an understanding with France was sincerely desired by large masses of the people. Books by French authors at that time enjoyed wide circulation in Germany; any French politician speaking or writing for a *rapprochement* was

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heartily cheered beyond the Rhine. An outstretched hand of friendship would have been eagerly clasped. And who can question that French security would have been stronger to-day, as the result of an honourable settlement with Germany, than it is now, with treaties unimpaired but with Germany in revolt?

As it was, French policy missed that opportunity at every turn. The occupation in 1923 of the Ruhr district of Germany by French and Belgian troops finally turned the scales. Undertaken on the flimsiest possible legal pretext, and in the face of the disapproval of the whole world, this unofficial but ruthless war caused a profound transformation. "The Rape of the Ruhr" sounded the death-knell of pacifism in Germany. With her fairest province outraged in this manner, it was but natural that the desire for peace, goodwill, and international understanding should give way to a mood of defiance. It is true that there were various degrees of nationalism. While the prevailing attitude towards the Ruhr invasion was "passive resistance", there were groups of resolute young men who on their own responsibility undertook acts of sabotage in order to frustrate the task of the invading troops. Bridges and signalboxes were blown up at night by mysterious

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bands of "activists" to prevent the French from exporting coal out of Germany. Among these *saboteurs* were communist miners as well as nationalist students. The most famous of the latter was Albert Leo Schlageter, a young ex-officer, who was responsible for some of the biggest acts of sabotage. He was caught and, after a farcical "court martial", shot by the French. He has since become the hero of the National Socialist movement, and his attitude was certainly characteristic of the state of mind which made it possible for the movement to become the strongest power in the country. Young, proud and patriotic, Schlageter felt deeply the shame of his country, and he concluded that to restore its honour was an ideal for which no price was too high and no suffering too great. Though his actions were not generally approved, his spirit was admired by the entire nation.

In the meantime a similar wound had been inflicted on Germany on her Eastern frontier. By the Treaty of Versailles, a strip of land which Poland had declared to be vital to her economic and political development, had been carved out of the German Empire and given to that country as an approach to the sea. To give Poland a first class harbour, the purely German city of Danzig, which

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is situated at the end of this "corridor", had been declared a Free City and put under the protection of the League of Nations. In the province of Upper Silesia, which contains some of the most valuable natural resources and industrial equipment of Germany, a plebiscite was ordered. It produced results favourable to Germany; but meanwhile armed Polish insurgents, under shelter of the French army of occupation, had already taken possession of a large part of the province. When the Allied Commission came to decide on the result of the plebiscite, it largely disregarded the poll and took into consideration the *fait accompli* created by the Polish insurgents. In vain did the German Government protest. Excitement was running high, and a number of irregular Volunteer Corps were secretly organized by German ex-officers, with the tacit approval of the heads of the regular army, in order to resist Polish aggression and regain, if possible, some of the lost ground. Guerilla fighting continued for many months and actually resulted in the withdrawal of the Poles to those territories given over to them by the Allied Commission. Here again the spirit of active defiance arose out of bitter injustice and helplessness. The Eastern Volunteer Corps, who had thus successfully demonstrated to the Ger-

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one opinion on the question of who or what caused the Great War; at any rate the facts which have since come to light in various countries show the problem to be far more complex than it had appeared in the days of Versailles. To-day no one who has seriously studied the political and economic developments leading up to the crisis of 1914 can blame the German people for holding the view that the terrible judgment passed upon them without trial in 1919 was unjustified.

For the present argument the important point is that the question of responsibility for the war was unnecessarily dragged into the peace treaty instead of being left to the historians to whom it properly belongs. A victorious party is always tempted to crown its victory with a moral defamation of the vanquished. By yielding to that weakness, the authors of the Versailles Treaty forced the question of war guilt, which would otherwise have been forgotten, into the forefront of European controversy, thus preventing for all time the disappearance of the division of Europe into victorious and defeated nations. The height of folly, however, was reached when the whole of the treaty with its wholesale demands for land and money was formally based on a "moral right" provided by the one-sided verdict on

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Germany's responsibility for the outbreak of the war. By adding, in this manner, a humiliating moral stain to the crushing payment due for military defeat, the Allies gratuitously offered Germany a legitimate cause of complaint against the entire treaty. What was called "the war guilt lie" quite naturally wounded Germany's self-respect, and the resentment against it helped to swell the already powerful stream of national defiance.

It should be clearly understood that the *active* defiance, which has been mentioned, was for a long time confined to isolated cases, and was approved neither by the German Government nor by the majority of the population. Only in the case of the passive resistance against the occupation of the Ruhr had the government approved, and even organized, defiance. Apart from that, the prevailing idea was "liberation by fulfilment of Treaty obligations"—the famous *Erfüllungspolitik*—which became the main object of attack by the nationalist forces as they grew in strength.

The struggle for liberation was carried on by successive German governments in a long series of international conferences, in which two demands were invariably put forward: the termination of Allied occupation, and the alleviation, on economic-

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ally possible lines, of reparation payments. The names of Rathenau, Stresemann and Brüning, are representative of this struggle, in the course of which Germany succeeded in winning the sympathy, and even the friendship, of a considerable section of world opinion. The entry of Germany into the League of Nations, and the Treaty of Locarno by which Germany gave up all claims to the restitution of her former Western frontier, were milestones on that stony road to freedom. There were, it is true, some lapses from this course; for instance, when Dr. Rathenau, bitterly disappointed by Lloyd George's refusal to listen to German requests at the Genoa conference, concluded a treaty of friendship with Soviet Russia. This treaty was for a few years the background of much military scheming, the chief effect of which was to give a faint ray of hope, however fictitious, to nationalist "activists". On the whole, however, the line of "fulfilment" was steadfastly followed from the time of the French and Belgian withdrawal from the Ruhr until the trade depression of 1931, when "bread before reparations" came to be the irresistible outcry of a desperate nation.

And what—the question was raised with growing insistence—have the authors of the fulfilment policy

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to show for their pains? It must be fairly stated that they obtained the gradual scaling down and eventual cancellation of reparations; the liberation of the Rhineland five years before the Treaty date; the recognition, in principle, of Germany's equal right to armaments; and a widespread sympathy and feeling of goodwill in most countries. But it cannot be denied that except for the last of these benefits it was not so much the reasonableness of German governments as the nationalist outcry in the country which produced these results. Time after time the victors refused to yield while they were still able to do so with good grace. Time after time they yielded to fear of nationalist agitation. By tragic irony, moreover, it happened that, while moderate governments were in office in Berlin, stern reaction ruled in Paris; and when at last tolerance had gained the upper hand in France, the Germans, worn out by waiting, had turned to open defiance as the last resort in their struggle for freedom.

Such is the answer, in general terms, to the question as to whether the Allies were to blame for the recrudescence of the fighting spirit in Germany. What has been said so far is admittedly only one side of the picture. How much political, social, and economic developments within German borders

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have contributed to the conditions in which the "national revolution" occurred remains to be explained. As for the responsibility of the outside world, there can be little doubt that vindictiveness after victory was the seed of the harvest which is now being reaped. ~

III

RISE AND FALL OF THE REPUBLIC

“**T**hat which is tumbling, you shall overthrow,” wrote the philosopher Nietzsche. This is, if you ask any of Hitler’s men, exactly what the “National Revolution” has done.

Few Germans will dispute that, after fourteen years of trial, political democracy had been found unworkable by a vast majority of the nation. But for the universal disgust at the inefficiency and inaptitude of the “system”, as the Democratic Republic was called, it is inconceivable that Hitler, even with the ingenious preparations made by the “Barons’ Cabinet”, could have marched his revolutionary force into the palace of power without finding a single door locked. Things were ripe for a change. The Republic was played out; and an impartial review of its record leaves one with the impression that the German people had, on the whole, a number of sound reasons for their verdict

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that the experiment had not been successful. This review must now be briefly given, as it is impossible to understand the events of 1933 without some knowledge of the political trends leading up to them.

The story starts, perhaps rather arbitrarily, with the German revolution of 1918. It is a fashion of recent writings on Germany to state that there was no such thing as a revolution in 1918. That is undoubtedly wrong. Not only were the crowned heads of the German states and of the Empire itself deposed, but the power of the pre-war ruling classes—the princes, landowners, generals and bureaucrats—was broken. General franchise was introduced for the first time and a vast mass of social legislation arose out of the constitutional change. It took the ruling castes more than a decade to rise once more to a position which enabled them to become the bridge over which the Nazi movement walked into power. The fact that the general war weariness made it extremely easy for the revolution to succeed is no evidence that it did not exist. It is equally untrue to say that the democratic Republic was a foreign scheme forced upon Germany by the victorious powers. The ideas which found expression in the Constitution of 1919 had been fighting for recognition in Germany for more than a century.

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It is a mistake to assume that a Liberal Constitution is in itself unsuited to the German character. Liberalism, tolerance and democracy have long been very vital forces in Germany, and in a large part of the country, particularly in the South and West, traditions of civil liberty are strong even to-day. One need only recall the name of Goethe to open up a world of German thought, exercising its influence to this day, based on humanism and tolerance. Indeed it was chiefly with the intention of connecting the new German Republic with this living tradition of Goethe's work that Weimar, the scene of his greatness, was chosen as the seat of the National Assembly. In Weimar was set up the new constitution which made "the German people, united in its tribes", the one and exclusive source of political power. And although it is now forgotten, it is nevertheless true that in spite of the humiliation of defeat and the exhaustion of enforced starvation, many of the young people of 1919 walked about with exactly the same inner certainty of a coming millennium as do the young Nazis of to-day.

Liberalism, however, is dependent on security. When a nation's life is menaced by the disintegration of its state, and when revolutionary disturbances

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threaten the traditional order of society, it becomes very difficult for governments to rule with the least possible interference with the behaviour of the individual—which is the essential principle of Liberalism. Germany did not escape from the war, as the victorious powers did, with its traditional forms of community and state unbroken. On the contrary, the latent particularism of the confederate German states was dangerously intensified, partly because of the lack of a strong central authority, and partly because there were profound differences in the political reaction of the various states to the defeat. There was the danger of the Rhineland separating itself from the Reich under the pressure of French policy and under the protection of French bayonets. There was also the danger of Bavaria realizing her cultural relations and economic affinities with Austria by the formation of some kind of Danube Federation, a tendency which was eagerly supported by the French, who carried on an intensive propaganda campaign from their legation in Munich. Lastly, there was the danger of Polish annexation, by military force, of large parts of German territory in the East far in excess of those sections alienated by the Treaty of Versailles.

The centrifugal forces were further increased by

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the fact that some German states, as for instance, Bavaria and Saxony, for a time developed a strong tendency towards Communism, while others fought desperately to suppress that movement within their borders. Indeed, when a Soviet Republic was set up in Bavaria, the central government sent an army from Prussia which occupied Munich, and overthrew the Red régime.

In the circumstances, it was perhaps natural that there should have emerged a general desire for a strong state, capable of keeping the cracking frame of Germany together, for a state which could guarantee to the weary citizen orderly conditions for the pursuance of his business. The history of Europe is full of parallels for such reliance on the power of the state in times of national distress. After all, England had her Cromwell, and if the political history of Tudor times were read to-day with German post-war conditions in mind, many striking similarities would be discovered. The Weimar Republic had hardly come into being when it found itself faced with an urgent need for the re-establishment of the authoritarian state. It is extremely difficult in any circumstances to strengthen the authority of the state while retaining the delicate balance needed for Liberal methods of government. In the case of

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Germany, other influences helped to make the working of the Liberal Constitution almost impossible.

For more than a century the business of building up a strong state had been the virtual monopoly of the Prussian ruling classes. King Frederick the Second had founded the tradition, and after the Napoleonic wars it was Prussia which first established a powerful state based on a "People's Army" and a cast-iron Civil Service. About that time there came into being in Prussia that unique philosophic conception which asserted that the state was the only form in which a human being could acquire reality and importance. Kant laid the foundations, Hegel built on them until he had worked out what amounts to an almost religious worship of the state. And the lesson was injected into generation after generation of Prussians. When Bismarck succeeded in forcing the German princes into an all-German Federation, it was accepted as inevitable that the King of Prussia should be German Emperor. So again, after fifty years, when the Germans had to strengthen their outward bonds of unity, they looked to the Prussians to do the work at which they were experts. And these builders could not be expected to work to any other than their own traditional design.

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If the Socialist and Liberal politicians who took over the government after the revolution found little active opposition from the former ruling classes, they were confronted on the other side with a powerful force of extreme revolutionaries. The Communists, organized in the "Spartakus" movement, had been the vanguard of the revolution. They had in mind a complete reversal of the political and social order. When the Social Democrats, called in by the dying Empire, established their own dominion on the foundations of the revolution, the Communists felt that they had been cheated out of the spoils of victory. Instead of the expropriation of capitalists and landowners which had been promised during the revolution, the Social Democrats were content to set up a commission of inquiry into the possibilities of nationalization. Instead of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the new rulers set up the most liberal constitution in the world, leaving the ruling classes largely undisturbed in their position of wealth and influence. With the example of Soviet Russia behind them, and with the Russians fighting with money and propaganda to spread revolution across Europe, the Communists were, for a time, very near to their goal. It was the determination of the Social Democrats to save Germany in its tradi-

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tional form which prevented a Bolshevist victory in the second revolution that occurred in 1919.

In the course of these domestic struggles the Labour leaders, afraid that if given arms the workmen would go over to "Spartakus", formed instead a formidable army of volunteers recruited almost entirely from ex-officers. Thus the military caste soon made itself indispensable for the existence of the Republic. If the German socialists failed to assert themselves within the Republic which had been placed into their hands, the responsibility lay to a large extent with the Russian Bolsheviks who, with incredible stupidity, continued to stir up rebellions in Germany long after the genuine fire of 1918 had died out. They deliberately kept the two sections of the German Labour movement at loggerheads for fourteen years and thus prevented the working-class as a whole from making its weight felt.

While the young Republic was still fighting its enemies within and without, there took place an event which was to effect profound changes in the order of German society. What was called "the inflation", that is, the rapid devaluation of the German currency, set in with full force in 1923. There had already been a certain amount of depreciation before the occupation of the Ruhr, but although

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investors were hit, the economic balance was not seriously disturbed. The shock of the Ruhr invasion, and the methods used to finance the German "passive resistance", made inflation uncontrollable. When money values depreciated from day to day, and prices increased with equal rapidity until the charge for a tramfare rose to several thousand million marks, all money property was practically destroyed. The entire money capital of the nation had to be written off. The savings of the entire population were wiped out. Those classes who had either land, houses, or industrial equipment, kept their property intact, though many were forced to sell for the sake of ready money. On the other hand, the urban middle-class was left without support, and had to start their economic life anew in conditions very similar to those of the manual workers.

The economic destruction of the middle-classes did not lead to a corresponding change in their outlook. On the contrary, the more they sank into proletarian conditions, the stronger they emphasized the idealistic sentiments of their former prosperity. Pictures of the Kaiser were once more appearing on drawing-room walls; military decorations and old uniforms were taken out of dusty boxrooms and worn again on Sundays. From 1925 onwards these

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disinherited classes were only too ready to believe that they had been treacherously deceived by the Republic, and that a restoration of the former national glory would restore to them all they had lost.

If the Socialists did not use their positions of control to introduce socialist measures, they failed to produce any other constructive programme; and it was natural that more determined forces should take over the task which they had shirked. For more than ten years the Socialists remained within the Reich Government in one form or another, and retained considerable influence in the Civil Service as well as in the social and economic organizations. Even stronger was their influence in the educational and intellectual spheres: the stage, the press, literature and the schools kept for a long time socialist sentiments in the foreground. But the real control had passed out of Socialist hands as long ago as 1923. The Reich Government was from that date onwards mainly directed by men of Liberal and Conservative politics.

The political system had by that time developed all the evils inherent in a Liberal constitution without developing its constructive ideals. Proportional Representation, for instance, was no doubt intro-

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duced into the Constitution by an act of idealism; but the German electorate was not politically educated to such extreme liberty. It had to develop entirely new formations of political opinion out of changed social conditions. In their anxiety to give freedom to every organization of political activity, the authors of the Weimar Constitution had made it possible for even a tiny group to be represented in Parliament. The result was that every conflict of local interest led to a split in existing political parties. In the end, there were no fewer than twenty-six fully fledged parties competing for the votes of the electors. It is obvious that efficient government could not be dependent on a Parliament in which more than two dozen parties fought one another bitterly over every single legislative issue. Political education might have improved this state of affairs, and indeed nothing was more important to the German people, who had just received an unaccustomed degree of political freedom, than education in parliamentarism. Here the system of election by party lists which had been coupled with that of proportional representation turned out to be fatal. By substituting lists for personal candidates, it eliminated the vital element of personal persuasion in the constituencies. A man might under such

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conditions vote for the party which represented his pet theory or grievance, whereas he would never have voted for its incapable candidate if he had chanced to meet him. Thus politics became purely dogmatic and theoretical. In the end the mass of electors got tired of the whole incomprehensible game and turned to movements which promised "direct action" over the heads of the parties.

To a considerable extent it was this error of the constitution-builders of Weimar which made it impossible for the Republic to assume a clear-cut, definite character. From the beginning there was never a government whose component parties were of one mind. There was, for the same reason, no chance for these governments to develop a clear policy, nor for the voters to turn out a government they disliked in favour of an alternative government in which they placed greater trust. Coalition followed coalition; sometimes their basis was extended slightly more towards the right, at other times a little more towards the left, but the leading personalities remained the same, and so did their policies. The unfortunate voter eventually lost all feeling of responsibility for the proceedings in parliament and began to vote for a Guy Fawkes policy.

The example of the multiplicity of parties in

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parliament was taken up in the country by organizations of all kinds. In the end, every profession, sport, industry and fad had a large number of rival organizations existing for identical purposes. Moreover, each association was being used by financial or professional interests for the time-honoured purpose of "lobbying". It became obvious to everyone—but the members of parliaments, and the presidents of associations—that national life was being encumbered by a stupid over-organization. In 1930 even a liberal cabinet minister was moved to ask angrily whether the Germans were a nation or a heap of vested interests. In fact, while this system was still in full bloom, the population had already disowned it and followed their natural desire for clear-cut decisions. From election to election, the electorate gathered more and more into two main camps while the older parties dwindled to insignificance. By 1931, the larger part of those who had supported the nationalist movement were already behind the National Socialist Party, while the Communists were taking away votes from the Socialists by leaps and bounds. There were additional reasons for this development—mainly the growth of unemployment—but it can hardly be disputed that the political deadlock created by the misuse of parlia-

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mentarism largely contributed to the radicalization.

When Dr. Brüning formed his cabinet in 1930, it had become evident that parliamentary government as it had hitherto been understood was no longer possible. Dr. Brüning was more than a clever manipulator of parliamentary sentiments. One of the sincerest statesmen of modern Europe, he deeply felt the conflict between popular ideals and existing institutions. It may be that he could have saved parliamentarism and democracy in Germany by resolutely changing the franchise legislation and tiding over a period of interregnum by committees of Parliamentary control. He chose instead to shut down Parliament and to base his authority on an obscure clause of the Constitution which gave to the President of the Republic almost unlimited power in the case of national emergency. Such emergency was declared to have arisen, and Dr. Brüning relied on the President to sign the decrees by which he carried on the government. Presidential authority was tremendously strengthened by this procedure—which was based on the theory that the government of the day no longer drew its authority from the parliamentary electorate, but directly from the elected President. The next step was that the result

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of General Elections could be entirely disregarded, as it was indeed disregarded by Herr von Papen, who overthrew Brüning simply by replacing him in the President's confidence.

In this way Dr. Brüning, the last defender of the Democratic Republic, was felled by his own weapon. He had hoped once more to consolidate the crumbling system by a procedure similar to that with which Great Britain had confronted her national crisis of 1931; for when the National Government was formed in London, the eyes of many Germans were looking across the Channel with envy and hope. The German press at that time was full of admiration for the British example, and books were published which described in glowing terms the patriotic sacrifice of Mr. MacDonald, while they had in mind a similar transformation of Dr. Brüning's Cabinet in their own country. But repeated attempts to draw the National Socialist movement, which had become the strongest party in opposition to the Republic, into the current of democratic government, ended in failure. The Government at Berlin was more and more isolated on an icebound summit, while an ever-increasing majority of the nation looked on in disgust.

It was not only the inefficiency of German Par-

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liamentary Government which produced such general hostility in Germany, but also the unwholesome post-war symptoms which the wavering Republic had not been strong enough to suppress. There had been corruption on a scale never before known in Germany, who had always prided herself on the incorruptibility of her Civil Service and the honesty of her business men. The culprits of a large number of public scandals were, moreover, connected in one way or another with the Republican parties, and in some cases even with high state officials. The inflation had destroyed all sense of business honesty by destroying the only reliable basis of contracts. The state itself, which had wiped out its entire liabilities by depreciating the currency, seemed to have set the example of dishonesty. It was perhaps not surprising that the traditional reliability of the German business men did not withstand the temptations of such an economic revolution. The blame for these developments was with varying degrees of justification laid at the door of the Republic; and once this line of attack was taken, all the social evils resulting from the world-wide demoralization which followed in the wake of the war were added to the list of charges. Ten years after its birth the Weimar Republic had become identified in the mind of the

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masses with administrative inefficiency, corruption, dishonesty and weakness. The structure was crumbling.

IV

FORERUNNERS OF THE REVOLUTION

The electorate was turning away from the constitutional parties and swelling the ranks of the Communists and the National Socialists. Each succeeding election made the position of the moderate parties, which provided the basis for government, more precarious. Dr. Brüning, the Catholic chancellor, was at last faced with a situation in which financial and economic emergency measures were obstructed by the negative majority of the combined extreme Left and Right in the Reichstag. More than once the Reichstag was dissolved and new elections held, the Cabinet meanwhile passing its decrees by orders in Council. But this method could only be repeated a few times before the Government's position became untenable. In the circumstances, Dr. Brüning had the choice of two alternatives: either he had to win the parliamentary support of one of the extreme parties, or he had to dispose

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of Parliament altogether. The Communists were never seriously regarded as possible partners of a coalition; in fact they relied so strongly on their orders from Moscow, that they would in any case have refused to join forces with a bourgeois party. There remained only the National Socialists.

By 1930, the feeling had become fairly general that the National Socialists, though their programme was thought to be unworkable, comprised within their movement a good many valuable forces. The development of foreign affairs had made the whole of the population strongly nationalist, and the economic developments of recent years had turned the minds of large sections of the nation towards some kind of state socialism. At the same time, parliamentary government, which had unfortunately led to an exaggeration of party strife and was thus holding up all constructive efforts, was almost universally believed to be doomed. It seemed that there was no profound difficulty in a government of national concentration, combining the National Socialist mass movement with the various moderate parties. Indeed, Dr. Brüning made the strongest efforts to form such a coalition. He had many long interviews with Hitler, and he seems to have gone very far in offering the Nazi party an appropriate

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share of official appointments. But Hitler was holding out for sole control; his movement was still growing, and the power of the moderate parties was fast decreasing. He would not give up the hope of being able to rule without compromise. So Dr. Brüning turned to the other alternative.

The Weimar Constitution contained a clause which although intended for real emergencies only, had for some years been used whenever a parliamentary deadlock made it desirable for the Government to carry out measures independent of the Reichstag. Article 48 of the Constitution provided that the President on the advice of the Cabinet was authorized, in certain cases, to promulgate decrees without parliamentary sanction. The approval of Parliament was not entirely dispensed with, but it could be postponed. This article was now stretched to the point of basing the whole of the Cabinet's policy on the authority of the President. Dr. Brüning stated quite frankly that his was a "President's Cabinet", which could no longer be defeated by the Reichstag, in which it did not command a majority. This was, as it turned out, the end of the German experiment in parliamentarism. As soon as the first step in the new direction was taken, warning voices were raised in the democratic camp. It was pointed

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out that the moderate parties were digging their own graves, and that the authority of the President, once firmly established beyond the control of Parliament, might one day be used against the forces which it was meant to strengthen.

Doubtless Dr. Brüning saw the danger as well as anyone, and he did not underrate the perils which either a change in the President's office or a sharpening of political conflicts might bring forth, but he relied firmly on the personal confidence of the President. Events were moving swiftly, and a financial disaster was threatened if the Government did not put all its strength into constructive actions.

Yet for more than a year Brüning never relaxed his efforts to come to an understanding with Hitler; and although he had to suffer almost unbearable personal indignities at the hands of the National Socialist leaders, he firmly upheld the view that the continuance of government without the support of that mass-movement would leave the state dangerously isolated from the people, a condition which could only result in catastrophe.

During the fateful year 1931 Dr. Brüning's Government revealed itself increasingly as a forerunner of revolution. In foreign policy its aims showed hardly any difference from those of the extreme

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nationalists, although the methods used were those of persuasion and not of threats. In finance the banking crisis forced the Government to take over a large part of the tumbling institutions. By the autumn of 1931, two of the biggest German banks were virtually under state management, and it was calculated that the Reich and Prussian governments held more than half of the total capital of all German banks. The nationalization of banking, thus initiated by force of circumstances, was taken in hand within the framework of a general scheme of banking reform. When the depreciation of the British currency, together with the hothouse growth of economic nationalism all over the world, curtailed German export trade, Germany had either to default on her foreign debts or to lower her standard of living decisively. The Brüning Government chose the latter alternative and introduced decrees allowing a universal reduction of wages, salaries, rents and interest rates, independent of existing contracts. Prices and exchange operations were soon controlled by the state, and foreign trade came in for strict supervision by state authorities. At the beginning of 1932 state capitalism, forced on Germany by international developments, had already grown considerably. Preparations had been made for a

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scheme of economic planning such as the capitalist system had never yet experienced.

These profound changes were carried out by a Government of the moderate parties without direct influence from the National Socialist movement—which had for years propagated very similar ideas. For a time it seemed that the latent revolution would find practical expression without interrupting the continuity of constitutional government. In May 1932, however, Dr. Brüning attempted to carry his non-violent revolution into a field which was protected by vested interests of unexpected strength. For years the expropriation of a number of bankrupt estates in East Prussia for the settlement of unemployed had been under consideration, and Brüning thought that the time had come to begin this important enterprise in earnest. But the holders of these estates, the Prussian Junkers, who had quietly regained a good deal of their former influence, raised violent protests. Among them were intimate friends of President Hindenburg, who himself belonged to this class and had an estate in East Prussia. Brüning's position had by that time become so precarious, and the growth of the National Socialist Party so impressive, that not much was needed to cause the frail plank on which he was

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standing to collapse. The final blow came in an entirely unforeseen manner.

There existed in Berlin an exclusive club of Prussian landowners, officers, industrialists and high civil servants, which had for some time drawn a number of influential personalities into its ranks. The "*Herren Klub*"—or "Gentlemen's Club"—did not have a definite political programme; it was meant to provide a meeting place for men of a certain outlook. The members of the "*Herren Klub*" were conservative and nationalist; some of them were also monarchists, but all were united by a detestation of political parties. Although they recognized, rather patronizingly, the constructive strains in the National Socialist movement, they were worlds apart from its revolutionary ideas. They rather regarded the Nazi movement as a temporary ground-swell which might serve to destroy the power of political parties and trade unions, thus clearing the way for national unity as they conceived it.

President Hindenburg had been a frequent visitor to the "*Herren Klub*", and he valued the solidly patriotic, conservative outlook of its members. When in the critical days of May 1932 they approached him with a scheme for political reconstruction, they found it easy to gain his ear. Among the members

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of the "Herren Klub" there was a former cavalry officer of great personal charm and urbanity, whose idealistic outlook had won him general regard among a large circle of friends. Baron Franz von Papen was a Roman Catholic, vaguely connected with the Catholic Centre Party of Dr. Brüning. Politically he was a blank page, except for occasional journalistic activity which had led him to buy a considerable block of shares in the famous catholic newspaper *Germania*. In addition, he was well connected, through the "Herren Klub", with leading personalities of the conservative parties and the National Socialist movement.

It was thought that a Government under Papen's leadership might raise politics out of the muddle of party strife, and command the support, or at least the tolerance, of both the Catholic Centre Party and the National Socialists. In this way at least a shadow of parliamentary government would be upheld, as those two parties together commanded a majority in the Reichstag. Brüning was to be retained in the cabinet as foreign secretary, and one or two Nazi nominees given minor posts. This ingenious scheme was quietly worked out and discussed with the President and his advisers. One morning the chancellor was called for and con-

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fronted with the complete plan. He was aghast. Although a man of smooth words and great moderation, he was essentially one of that younger German generation which was dreaming of a new world. His innermost being revolted at the idea of working under the control of reactionary, undemocratic forces to whom the great spiritual rejuvenation of the last decade was so much hot air. He also resented the way in which the intrigue had been carried on behind his back. He flatly refused to co-operate with Baron von Papen and declared that his party would uncompromisingly oppose the new government.

These events have never fully emerged from the rumours and legends in which they were clothed at the time. It is still widely believed that President Hindenburg, too old to realize the consequences of his action, curtly dismissed Brüning in the interests of his own friends. This version does less than justice to the old soldier, who was the one firm point in German politics during a long period of chaos. There is no doubt that the President had been led to believe that von Papen would be acceptable as a chancellor both to Brüning and to Hitler. He hoped that there would at last be a possibility of re-establishing a truly constitutional basis of government

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which would free him from the scruples of conscience in which the procrastinations of constitutional practice had recently involved him. The scheme miscarried. Not only Brüning refused, but Hitler was even firmer in declining to co-operate. What the men of the "Herren Klub", with all their patriotic intentions, had been unable to feel, was that revolutionary emotions had gone too far for feudalistic landowners, aristocrats and big industrialists to rule the nation with benevolent despotism.

Franz von Papen and a number of distinguished aristocrats of the "Herren Klub" now formed a Cabinet of their own without any parliamentary support, in the hope that the efficiency and disinterestedness of their rule would soon smooth out the difficulties which separated them from the political parties. To a certain extent they succeeded. Being bred and trained in the traditions of a ruling class, they could command where their predecessors had to explain and persuade. Their position was greatly strengthened by the fact that the Reichswehr, which was then the most important single power within the state, was represented in the Cabinet by General von Schleicher. This clever staff-officer, who had a flair for politics rare among soldiers, had indeed been the chief instrument of the

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intrigue by which Dr. Brüning was overthrown. He was perhaps the only member of the "Baron's Cabinet" who saw from the start that the attempt was bound to fail in the end. So he sat quiet, saving himself for the next scene of the drama.

Meanwhile Papen began to rush in where his predecessors had feared to tread. The position of Prussia had become impossible. While the government of the Reich had for some time been moving towards the right, Prussia still had a government of Social Democrats in coalition with the Catholic Centre Party. The Prussian Cabinet, under the able leadership of the Socialists Braun and Severing, had been in office for ten years; and although the elections for the Prussian diet had recently gone against them, they refused to budge unless an alternative government was presented by the parties in the Diet. But though there was a negative majority against the Prussian Cabinet, the parties could not come to a common platform in support of a new government. So the Socialist Ministers remained, in spite of a growing popular clamour for their resignation. When the anti-Socialist "Baron's Cabinet" was formed in the Reich, it soon became evident that, in view of the close contact between the two administrations, both of which were seated in Berlin, their

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political differences were an obstruction to efficient government. If the conservative government in the Reich was to carry out any of its national schemes, it would have to remove the barrier of "Red Prussia".

Baron von Papen chose the shortest way to his objective. He obtained from the President a decree—based on a half-forgotten clause of the constitution—which enabled him to dismiss any state government and to put a Reich Commissioner in its place whenever public order and security were endangered. Such a state of emergency was immediately declared to be existent. Without listening to the protests of the Prussian ministers, Papen dismissed them like so many office boys. When the ministers declared that they would hold on to their offices until removed by physical force, Papen coolly provided the force by sending a few trusted police officers to turn the tenacious statesmen out of their official premises. There followed a legal farce at the Supreme Court, in which the deposed ministers obtained recognition of their continued ministerial status, but the Reich government was equally upheld in its practical occupation of government offices. There was no reality attached to these proceedings, the only reality being the amazing fact

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that at a strong word of command the socialist ministers of Prussia, able and experienced leaders of an undoubtedly efficient administration, meekly retired behind a smoke-screen of legal arguments.

The Prussian obstacle removed, Baron von Papen proceeded to re-establish public order which had been gravely disturbed by frequent street fighting between members of the extreme parties. Stern measures were taken to prevent further political outrages, and within a week peace was restored. The population recognized in the new ministers men who were accustomed to rule. Exhausted by years of political tension, many peaceful citizens soon rallied to a government which did at least know its mind and relieve business from the nightmare of sudden disturbances. For the first time the National Socialist Party experienced a setback, many of its more conservative supporters taking the view that Papen was already carrying out all that was valuable in Hitler's programme. The restoration of public peace led to a return of confidence; unemployment began to decrease, and business to revive. In foreign affairs, Herr von Papen, who was well known and trusted in France, succeeded in reaping what Brüning had sown: at the Lausanne Conference Reparations were practically abolished.

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Yet, when another election was held, the "Baron's Cabinet" was shown to have the support of only ten per cent of the electorate. The democratic resentment against despotism was stronger than the recognition of its practical achievements. Herr von Papen was not dismayed. He was not a believer in parliamentarism, nor were any of his colleagues. After giving Hitler, the leader of the largest party, a fictitious opportunity to form a parliamentary government—which everybody knew could not be formed—the "Barons" reappeared, finally constituted on the authority of the President alone.

Baron von Papen continued to win increasing recognition, and he declared himself agreeably impressed by "the readiness of the German people to allow themselves to be led". For a time it seemed as if the representatives of the pre-war ruling class would be able to re-establish their position by sheer efficiency. Well versed in the art of all autocratic systems to shape public opinion and administrative factors according to the wishes of the Government, Herr von Papen discreetly appointed men of his own political leanings to as many administrative posts as he could make free by the removal of officials of opposition views. Soon he could claim to have a support in the Civil Service and in the

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State, provincial and local governments far exceeding the ten per cent which he had obtained in the elections.

The next step was to make his position legally independent of Parliament. A constitutional reform was prepared which drove the "carriage and pair" squarely through the Weimar Constitution. Somewhat after the American model, the government was in future to derive its power directly from the President, and the possibilities of a change by popular vote were severely limited. The state was to be of an "authoritarian" character, and the administration was given powers far beyond those which Dr. Brüning had taken on the strength of the "emergency" clause. In the background of these proceedings stood the dream of a restoration of the monarchy; but since the return of the Hohenzollerns would have revived all the old dynastic jealousies with redoubled force, the practical difficulties involved were enormous. It was obvious that a further step towards the unification of the German Reich had to be taken before a restoration of the Imperial throne could be thought of. Plans to this end were accordingly pushed forward with all speed.

Thus it seemed that the incredible had happened: a government fiercely hated by at least three-quar-

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ters of a highly organized population appeared to have settled down unruffled to a long period of despotic rule. Of the dangers involved in this state of affairs Herr von Papen was not oblivious. He tried more than once to build a bridge over the abyss separating the government from the people. His method was an attempt to tame Hitler. But although the fortunes of the National Socialist leader were beginning to decline, he refused to be tamed by a Government which had no patience with the Socialist part of his plan.

Intrigue breeds intrigue. When the "Presidential Cabinet" came out solidly on the side of reaction in politics and industry, it was clear that it would incur the fiercest hostility from the vast majority of a starving and dispossessed population. It had only one instrument of force to rely on, and that the strongest force existing in the country: the regular army. But at the head of the army was the Minister of Defence, General von Schleicher. He had been personally responsible for the intrigue which turned Brüning out and installed Papen in his stead. The General had, in common with most people, believed that the new cabinet would soon establish contact with the large popular movements of the right. When Herr von Papen became isolated the Prussian

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General revolted. Perhaps he had all along played his own game, as was widely suggested; but when he suddenly overthrew his chief and became Chancellor himself, he certainly showed more eagerness to gain popular support than Herr von Papen had done.

Schleicher brought all his amiability into play in order to make friends with leading personalities of widely different parties and movements. He proclaimed a political truce, saying that "petty politics fill no stomachs". Under this motto he found politicians, industrialists, and trade union leaders ready to give him tentative support. He almost succeeded in splitting the National Socialist movement by inducing Gregor Strasser, Hitler's second in command and the most reasonable among the Nazi leaders, to join the Cabinet. Hitler's repeated refusals to take office had created great disappointment in the ranks of his movement, and when an opportunity offered itself for the National Socialists to participate in the Government a section of the party was eager to take it. Hitler stamped on the rebellion with ruthless energy, and so strong was the tradition of personal loyalty to the leader, which had been carefully nursed throughout the rise of the movement, that he succeeded in forcing Strasser to

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resign his posts and to give up all thoughts of entering the Cabinet. (Strasser retired completely, but he is even to-day a force to be reckoned with as he enjoys enormous popularity among the Socialist wing of the Nazi movement. It is quite possible that the last has not been heard of him in German politics.)

When General von Schleicher failed, as his predecessors had failed, to "build the bridge" between the Government and the masses, his only alternative was an open dictatorship founded on the power of the Reichswehr. It is conceivable that he might have succeeded on those lines as he was personally not in the least a man of dictatorial habits and easily disarmed democratic suspicions by a real feeling for social problems; but when he failed to produce a practical programme for the solution of the all-important economic difficulties, those who had been prepared to tolerate his rule became restless. It was widely felt that friendly contacts and jovial behaviour were not sufficient. The industrialists were moreover becoming suspicious of Schleicher's close relations with the trade union leaders, and the big landowners openly revolted when he disregarded their claims to higher protection on the ground that the prices of the people's food must not be needlessly raised. What was more, the officers of the Reichs-

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wehr, who had never liked this ambitious schemer but had been flattered by seeing one of their ranks in the highest position in the state, soon recovered their critical attitude and allowed it to be known that they were not altogether behind Schleicher's Cabinet. The stage was set for another change.

To judge the situation correctly, it must be appreciated that for several years the popular foundations of succeeding governments had become smaller and smaller, while at the same time the pressure of political mass-movements towards the seat of power was steadily increasing. Eventually the question of how to bring the powerful currents of national movements into the sphere of government without a revolutionary upheaval had become the cardinal problem of German politics. In the all-pervading atmosphere of nationalism there could be no question of the "international" communists being drawn into the government without provoking a civil war. Thus the problem narrowed down to a taming of the National Socialists for the purpose of a coalition government. This was widely felt to be a task of the greatest importance far exceeding the needs of political expediency.

Even after the fall of Dr. Brüning the Catholic party never gave up its efforts to come to an

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understanding with the National Socialists. The Nationalist Party, although it heartily despised Hitler's revolutionary attitude, had even temporarily succeeded where others had failed. At a meeting of Nazi and Nationalist leaders in the picturesque mountain resort Harzburg, there was formed what was popularly called the "Harzburg Front" to which a number of other parties and movements, such as the Stahlhelm association, adhered. But this forerunner of the Nazi-Nationalist coalition of 1933 very soon collapsed because the economic theories of parties led by landowners and industrialists were incompatible with those of the Nazi movement, which was based on the peasantry and lower middle-classes.

When General von Schleicher failed to justify the confidence which had been widely, if tentatively, placed in him, the pressure of the political mass-movements soon revived. On the other hand it was believed that the chances of taming Hitler by responsibility, while withholding from him controlling power, were better now than they had ever been. His movement had undoubtedly begun to decline and was showing signs of internal disunion. Moreover, the two administrations of Herr von Papen and General von Schleicher had already transformed

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public life so thoroughly in a Nationalist sense, that the revolutionary urge behind Hitler's movement was thought to have lost a good deal of its force. Yet the practical chances of a coalition were small as long as Schleicher continued to rule firmly on the points of the Reichswehr bayonets. Again it was a furtive intrigue which created the desired opportunity.

Herr von Papen had made use of a regulation, never before enforced, by which a resigning Chancellor may continue to occupy his official residence for three months after his resignation. Now it happens that the Berlin Chancellery is situated next door to the presidential palace, and the occupants of both these buildings have the use of the same gardens. Walking under the beautiful snow-laden trees in the early morning, Herr von Papen met his distinguished neighbour, President von Hindenburg. Only the pine trees know what the two earnest men said to one another during their morning promenade, but it is certain that they repeated the meeting almost daily for many weeks. About Christmas it happened that Herr von Papen, journeying south for a holiday, was invited to the house of a banker where Adolf Hitler was the only other guest. When public curiosity was roused it

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was given out that there had been no more than a casual talk about the political situation. Soon Herr von Papen was back in the Chancellery garden, and the daily walks with the President were resumed.

Marshal von Hindenburg was at that time profoundly disturbed about the way things were shaping. If he was perhaps too old to see through every one of the political intrigues and machinations composing "the situation", the old soldier nevertheless felt strongly about his oath to the constitution, which was getting unbearably strained by the thinly-veiled dictatorship of his new Chancellor. No one could be surprised that the President was gratified to find the same sentiments in the charming companion of his morning exercise. During January there were many discreet comings and goings in the presidential palace. The decisive stage was reached when General von Schleicher had to present himself to the Reichstag, where it was obvious that he would not find a majority. Another election would have produced almost exactly the same deadlock. There was only one way out: a compulsory adjournment of the Reichstag for a long period. The authority of the President was needed to carry this action through.

Hindenburg, however, was fast losing confidence in his Chancellor. When it was put to him that the

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private negotiations of the last few weeks had created the practical possibility of drawing Hitler into a government of trusted conservatives, the President finally withdrew his confidence from Schleicher. It was rumoured that the General had attempted to break through the intrigue by arresting Herr von Papen and several other influential personalities; it was even rumoured that Schleicher had already prepared for a strong detachment of the army to occupy and protect governmental buildings in Berlin. The names of several highly placed men, among them a member of the Imperial family, were mentioned in connection with this story, the truth of which has never been proved or disproved. But whether the General-Chancellor had carried his fight for continued power so far, or whether he had only dropped a hint suggesting that such things were not inconceivable, the fact is that he was summoned by the President and curtly asked to resign.

His last act was to recommend Adolf Hitler for succession to the Chancellorship. Being far cleverer than any of the class-conscious barons with whom he had been associated in two cabinets, he probably foresaw that Hitler, once in the controlling position, would disappoint the illusions of his conservative colleagues and cut clean through von

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Papen's intrigue. Thus General von Schleicher, whose term of office had been greeted as the beginning of a long period of stability, retired in disgrace. Sick in body and soul he soon disappeared from the public eye—but not without the knowledge that his hated adversary would not long enjoy the fruits of his intrigue. Adolf Hitler was appointed Chancellor of the Reich under the supposedly powerful supervision of Herr von Papen, who now reappeared as Vice-Chancellor and Chief Commissioner for Prussia, while all the other important cabinet posts were given to men of decidedly conservative and anti-revolutionary views.

The "bridge" was built. The state was no longer isolated from the mass of the people, and if Hitler's National Socialist movement, with the newly allied Nationalist associations, represented only half of the nation, that was decidedly better than the measure of support recent governments had obtained; and the Junkers and industrialists in the cabinet would see to it that the other half was not suppressed to the point of civil war. It was this illusion of comparative continuity which moved vast sections of the nation outside the parties of the new Government coalition to enjoy without hesitation the fact that the people had indeed conquered the state.

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What is happening in Germany now appears to many people in other countries to be unreasonable, incomprehensible, and shocking; but if you ask the men of forty of any nation which took part in the late war what they would do if suddenly given sole political control of their country, you will find hidden in their minds ideas which on realization would produce results very similar to those of the German upheaval.

It is no coincidence that the leaders of the National Socialist movement are, almost without exception, men of less than forty-five years, while many of them are even ten years younger. In other countries very few men of forty have reached any position of political control. There is a good deal of resentment amongst young people against the tenacity with which the pre-war generation is holding on to the most influential positions. As time goes on, it becomes in-

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creasingly obvious in all countries that there is an abysmal difference between the outlook of men who spent some of their youth in the trenches, and that of their elders who had reached full maturity before the war started. World opinion, however, is still controlled by the pre-war generation, and so far the younger men have not made their ideas felt. Germany has now given her young men full power. The shock felt by world opinion at the behaviour of the new German régime is, to a considerable extent, the consequence of the first clash between two generations which are separated from one another by the enormous gulf of the war experience. Quite apart from the risk always involved in the transfer of executive power to youth uncontrolled by experienced age, the generation which has now come into power in Germany is driven by ideas and conceptions as far removed from those of their fathers as from the mentality prevalent in other western countries.

In England, the men who are now between thirty-five and forty-five are sometimes called by the bitter name of the "Lost Generation". There are millions of crosses in the cemeteries of Flanders to explain this name; but there is something in many of those who survived the war which makes them actually

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“lost” in another sense. Those who were young when the war called them appear now to be in a state of continued mental exhaustion. Many of them are, and feel themselves to be, unproductive, lacking in faith, and apathetic. A British ex-officer once told me: “I belong to the generation that is fed-up.” There could be no truer word for the feeling of that generation to-day. Perhaps its most characteristic representative is “Lawrence of Arabia” who, after distinguished war service, with a great career before him, chose to change his name and to become a private soldier in that modern monk’s monastery, the regular army. He found his peace in his own way. Thousands of others, equally full of resignation, also missed the connection with post-war life; they could never feel quite at home again in the world, though they may have found their way back into ordinary activities. There is, in all European countries morally devastated by war, a fraternity of such isolated men who understand one another beyond the frontiers of language by a certain fatalistic intonation.

Germany has her crosses in Flanders as well as the people who fought against her; and Germany has also her “Lost Generation” which, for a time, could not find anything worth living for; neither a

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faith nor an ideal, nor even active work for the common weal. The same sad hopelessness which pervades the books of Hemmingway or Robert Graves can be found in *All Quiet on the Western Front* by E. M. Remarque. If Germany had won the war, her war-generation would probably be as "lost" now as it is in most countries. But while the soldiers of the victorious nations found nothing but an exhausting fight for livelihood on returning home, it was not so in Germany. The revolution of 1918 attracted a section of those young men and gave them, at least temporarily, the vision of a new faith in a better world. Others found work of another nature waiting for them. Almost immediately after the war Germany's frontiers were threatened with invasion and her society was menaced by revolutionary communism. Young men were once again called upon to defend their country. And while the ex-soldiers of the victorious powers might have been exceedingly cynical about any suggestion, in 1919, that they should take up arms once more for patriotic ideals, it was different in Germany, where those ideals were not abstract conceptions but clearly visible realities. The result was that thousands of ex-soldiers, instead of being discharged into unwonted isolation, continued to follow a flag. What

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revolution and Eastern defence left undone in the minds of youth, the oppression by the Allies throughout the post-war decade helped to complete. Young men began to feel quite soon after the war that there was a tremendous task of heroic dimensions awaiting them in the self-preservation of their country and the reconstruction of a new community from the ruins of the war. Thus many of Germany's young ex-soldiers were saved from the fate of becoming a "Lost Generation".

Moreover, those Germans who are now about forty years of age, as Hitler and most of his lieutenants are, belong to a generation which, even before the war, showed signs of an outlook in strong contrast to everything which formed the accepted institutions of society. As early as 1910 these men, who were then youths of twenty, had taken on forms of expression which were as strange to their fathers as Hitlerism is now to the outside world. During the first decade of the century there began amongst undergraduates and schoolboys a movement which was destined to rise, from insignificant and often foolish beginnings, to immense importance. For a time the activities of these boys were exceedingly harmless; they roamed about in the country with rucksacks, singing almost forgotten

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folk-songs to the accompaniment of guitars. They camped in the open, busied themselves with the unearthing of folk-lore, and, as often as they could escape from school or university, generally carried on a romantic open-air life in the spirit of "Red Indians". It was only when an ingenious member of that movement, Hans Blüher, wrote a brilliant book on its history and ideals, that the public began to suspect that there had come into being a serious reaction to the prevailing mentality of schools, universities and public life in general. The chief tendency was a turning away from the materialism and individualism of the prosperity period and from the mechanization of life which the latest forms of capitalism had produced. Such movements are not at all infrequent among the youth of all countries, though generally they merge without friction with the current tendencies of public life as soon as the young men settle down to the job of making a living.

In Germany, the movement did not find its way into existing institutions, and that for good reasons. There then existed a similar reaction against traditions in almost every branch of intellectual life. In art, the School of Expressionism proclaimed the worship of the unreal. In science, so-called "border problems" achieved unheard-of importance. The

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accepted teaching of universities appeared to the younger writers and professors to miss the essential problems of humanity, and to confine itself within a rationalistic "Tower of Babel" which had almost lost touch with the emotional springs of life. Thus, psycho-analysis, for example, gained enormous currency. In the teaching of history a school emerged which substituted for the matter-of-fact description of events the "understanding" of their deeper significance, and which searched for a natural law in the history of mankind. Oswald Spengler was the best known exponent of this tendency, though his chief thesis, *Decline of the West*, appeared only after the war. That book has been widely misunderstood as being merely the expression of hopelessness in a defeated country. In reality, Spengler's ideas aimed rather at liberation from the Western civilization which the younger generation, since the beginning of the century, had felt to be without a future; so that Germans might feel free to work for the establishment of new and better "culture". Spengler's thesis, which had many forerunners and parallels in Germany, was a repudiation of the "declining West" of high capitalism, mechanized industrialism, and liberal democracy. That, for a decade after the war, Germany was the most determined exponent of all

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these institutions in Europe may appear to contradict that statement; but it must not be forgotten that post-war Germany was not the creation of the younger generation, which, indeed, came to be increasingly hostile to it.

There was a common tendency inherent in all the reform movements which attracted the young men of 1910; a profound distrust of rationalism, and an almost religious craving to give life a deeper significance. Many who felt thus sought the remedy in romantic eccentricities. The rucksacks and guitars of the young wanderers, and the revival of old Germanic designs, could hardly have had an active influence on public life. It was only slightly different with the re-establishment of old handicrafts in protest against mechanized methods of production. Common to all was, however, the feeling that the road which civilization had taken ended in a cul-de-sac. Even before the war the chasm between the old and young had become unnaturally wide.

The "Youth Movement", as the innumerable branches of this revivalism came to be called, was conscious of this state of affairs. In its many periodicals it developed the thesis that Youth must have its own way of life; that Youth was more than merely sons and daughters—it was a community with its

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own rights and laws. When a meeting of many branches of the "Youth Movement" was held in 1913 the common formula was laid down that Germany's youth would in future strive "to form its own life with inner truthfulness, and on its own responsibility". The direction in which all these tendencies were leading became evident when, six years later, a group of daring youngsters carried on a campaign for the organization of schoolboys for the purpose of reforming education under the slogan: "Class warfare of Youth against the Old".

The dangers and pitfalls of such mentality did not remain entirely unrecognized. There was no lack of warnings that youth in its romantic mysticism might, as it grew up, miss the connection with the realities of life. There was much criticism of the abstract repudiation of existing conditions in politics, industry and education. But attempts to formulate a working programme for an active influence on public life remained fruitless.

Perhaps it would be unfair to blame the German "Youth Movement" for the fact that they remained too long in their romantic isolation. The war gripped the young men exactly at the period when they might have developed a practical outlook. Those who remained at home were too young to

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carry out this important mental task; they merely continued to keep up the outer forms which their elder brothers and friends had invented. As the movement spread, the spiritual revolt which had found expression in open-air isolation was swallowed up by the process of "hiking" and such empty symbols as dress reform. When those young men who escaped death returned home after four years of rough life without intellectual nourishment, they soon regained the mystic sentiments of their pre-war life and went into their various activities with the secret vision of an early millennium.

The sincere craving for an idealistic life was mixed with a good deal of conceit and tactlessness, for which perhaps the lack of continuous education was mainly responsible. Idealism, however, remained the driving power, and as this generation is now emerging in the role of National leaders, it is still the driving power. It is impossible to understand the spirit of the new Germany without understanding the peculiar mentality of the young men who either formed part of the "Youth Movement" or grew up under its influence before the war. But nothing is more certain than that the significance of this outlook will not be clearly recognized by other countries for a considerable time to come.

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There is a profound reason for the fact that the Western powers went into the late war with the idea of "saving civilization". War propaganda apart—civilization, as realized in the great Western democracies, was indeed being menaced by the spirit of Germany, though not in the way which was then imagined. One wonders whether there are still many people who believe that the young men of Germany went into the war simply as victims of a great deception, devised by cunning politicians and militarists. Certain motives were, of course, common to all people who took part in the Great War. The Germans believed as much as the French did that they were forced to defend their homes. It need not be stressed that sacrifice for a great ideal has always appealed to youth of all nationalities. But many of the young Germans who went out to the mud of Flanders did not do so merely to strengthen the army of national defence, or to give themselves up to an overpowering emotion. They had a definite mission in mind: they felt that Germany was then labouring for a new ideal which was opposed to their conception of Western civilization. They believed that they were fighting for liberty to carry out their ideal, to find new forms of communal life in the economic, political and social spheres; to

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make the springs of life once again pervade every activity of man which modern civilization had sentenced to be empty and mechanical.

That idea was, rather vaguely, behind the German term of "kultur"—which was so fiercely resented abroad and was indeed felt to be a menace to all the established traditions of the white race. The contrast has to-day reappeared in all its violence. It is, in fact, more than a political phrase when the Vice-Chancellor Herr von Papen says that "the spirit of the national revolution is identical with the spirit of Flanders". But millions of young men who were not old enough in 1914 to go to the war have swelled by now the ranks of the ex-soldiers; and they have already gone one step further on that dark road of "kultur".

After the war economic and social changes gave a different turn to the problems of the youth movement, which had been confined originally to the moral and intellectual spheres. When inflation destroyed the property of the middle-classes, the sons of these "new poor" found themselves suddenly without the material basis on which they had been planning their lives. In the universities, State and private subsidies helped as much as possible, and thousands of undergraduates earned the money

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necessary to carry on their studies by taking up manual labour in their spare time. But even when these people had, with great efforts, managed to qualify for positions in the civil services, the law, and the professions, they found that these positions were already filled, and that there was nothing left for them but to grind their teeth and to take on jobs as unqualified workers, clerks, or shop assistants. Even this chance disappeared as unemployment increased. In 1932 there were literally hundreds of thousands of young men with university education who could not find employment and saw no hope of ever being able to work. This state of affairs—which, of course, did not apply to university students only, but was perhaps more bitterly felt by them than by other classes—produced not only a violent resentment against the State which was allowing such things to be; there emerged, at the same time, that contempt for all material values which the “Youth Movement” had already begun to propagate twenty years before. Material comforts, sour grapes in any case, were now proclaimed to be contemptible; and those who enjoyed them were widely regarded as belonging to a past age.

At this point the idealism of the youth movement reached a curious similarity to the trend of German

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Protestantism; and although the connection may at first appear artificial, it is not unimportant to an understanding of the mentality which has now come to the top in Germany. Religious teaching has always deeply influenced the economic behaviour of peoples. Although powerful, the opposite trend is almost insignificant by comparison. Whereas the Anglo-Saxon forms of Protestantism definitely encouraged economic success, and in some cases even accepted it as proof of heavenly approval, German Protestantism remained aloof from the ethics of trade and money-making. The same, of course, was true of the Catholic Church in all countries; but while Catholics are encouraged by religious teaching to be wary of all forms of worldly life, German Protestantism, as practised throughout the North of Germany, couples a stern command to hard work and fulfilment of duty with a deliberate contempt for economic success. Church and State have together worked out a tradition which counts for merit only such work as is poorly rewarded. Thus the State official, whether high or low, has always been more of a gentleman in German eyes than the business man, even when the latter was a millionaire and his loyalty to the common welfare undoubted.

After the war, the traditional order of values was

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greatly altered by the temporary eclipse of those classes which had formerly stood at the top of the social ladder. Money tended to acquire increasing importance, and big business gained a high position not only in a political and social sense, but even in the ideology of the people. When rationalization on the American model was becoming all the rage during the years of the fantastic inflow of foreign capital, the *Wirtschaftsführer*, or economic leader, came to be the object of a kind of national cult. The younger generation never felt very happy in this state of affairs; but it was only when the tin gods of industry and finance came crashing down from their altars, and economic devastation had made all poor together, that the spirit of contempt for economic possessions was revived with full force.

Such is the mentality which has moved ever-growing masses of the younger Germans to hostility towards the system of capitalism. For some years after the war, youth was either indifferent to politics or vaguely connected with Socialist and Communist movements. As it developed revolutionary ideas with regard to the order of society it felt the urge of Nationalism invading its mind. It was perhaps natural that the young men and women, who knew nothing of the origins of the war but had to

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bear the brunt of its consequences, should revolt against such injustice. They had not consciously experienced the continuity of pre-war politics, military defeat, and post-war humiliation. They had a legendary vision of lost greatness. The war had not been their war, and they bitterly resented having to suffer in body and mind for reasons which they could not visualize. Thus they moved more and more towards the Nationalist side of German politics while retaining the ideas and habits of social revolution.

Another important tendency arose out of the movements of the younger generation. Even before the war the youth of Germany had felt a craving for separation from its elders, for the creation of its own ideas and style of living. During the war the natural bond between fathers and sons was further weakened. Children grew up without the controlling influence of fathers who were serving in the war. Many lost their fathers and had to get on by themselves. In other cases, four years of separation between young and old had led to an estrangement which could not be fully repaired afterwards. So youth began to discount the older generation and to build up formations of social life entirely on its own. About five years after the war it had become

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an accepted view that every decent boy or youth ought to belong to some *Bund* or Association ; and what was called the Bund idea rose to immense importance in the minds of the young.

In these collective formations, which were invested with almost sacred value by their members, class distinctions were severely disregarded, and an authoritative system of leadership and obedience developed. The leaders were in most cases not older than their followers, but their position was supported by a most elaborate ideology of voluntary service. These groupings were gradually absorbing a huge section of German youth, and they became the incubating cells of that belief in discipline, leadership, and national unity which was the strength of the National Socialist Party and similar groups. In fact, without that nation-wide movement of the younger generation which had prepared the ground, Hitler could never have achieved the rapid spread of his party and its eventual rise to dictatorial power.

VI

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When the exhaustion and despair which followed in the wake of the war had worn off, the German people began to look for new ideas and conceptions which might help them to regain faith in their future. The first decade after the war saw the rise of countless new movements of religious, social, political and economic significance. Many of these enterprises were merely the expression of some eccentric desire or grievance. They died almost as quickly as they were born, only to be supplanted by others of a similar nature. What remained was a growing urge for spiritual leadership, a desire to be rid of despair and confusion and to follow a definite teaching. The great political parties were concerned with practical problems of enormous complexity and, apart from the Centre Party which was frankly and clearly based on the

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Roman Catholic Faith, and the Communist party with its Bible of Leninism, none of these organizations could offer any help in the terrible spiritual confusion. It was a fertile soil for a man who had worked out an extremely simple and intelligible programme of action disguised as a semi-religious doctrine.

Groping wildly in the darkness of doubt, the German people concentrated increasingly on two lines of thought which they hoped would lead to a better future. One was national reassertion in the face of degrading humiliation. The other was a reversal of the capitalist order of society which had come to falsify the meaning of human labour, of communal relationship, and of justice. As the immediate consequences of the war were gradually overcome, the appeal of nationalism widened more and more. When inflation and unemployment had reduced more than two-thirds of the nation to a state in which they had no material stake in the existing order of society, any promise to revise that order naturally attracted wide attention. By combining Nationalism and Socialism in a brief "activist" programme, a party could make its appeal to both these popular desires.

In the beginning of 1919 the Communists estab-

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lished a Soviet Republic in Bavaria. They provoked the strongest opposition among the mainly agricultural population of that state; and when their confused régime had lasted for a few weeks it was overthrown, to the intense relief of the Bavarians themselves, by a regular army division sent from Berlin and reinforced by a large number of volunteers. The struggle was brief and bloody. It led to a complete change, not only in the political order, but in the mentality of the Bavarians. Germany's southernmost state had done with revolution and disorder. Red Rule had made a deep impression, and the impression was thoroughly unfavourable. Once the Communists were overthrown, a great campaign for their complete suppression was started and it received general support.

Communist ideas had at that time found their way into the regular army, and when the change came, courses of patriotic instruction in political matters were started in order to combat subversive tendencies. A young corporal called Adolf Hitler distinguished himself as a speaker in these courses and, as he was a trusted patriot and had interested himself in politics, he received permission to join in debates at public meetings for the purpose of influencing opinion. It was on one of these official

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errands that Hitler dropped into a meeting of the newly formed "German Workers' Party". This organization had but six members. The statements of its speaker, an engineer named Gottfried Feder, who was mainly concerned with "breaking the power of capital interest", were freely laughed at by the assembly. Hitler was impressed by the idea of rousing the workers against the influence of "finance", which was in his mind identical with destructive internationalism. He joined the party as its seventh member, on condition that he should have complete control. He was made propaganda chief; and after a few highly successful meetings there was no longer any doubt that Adolf Hitler was the party's leader.

By the beginning of 1920 he had renamed the little party "National Socialist German Workers' Party" and, in collaboration with Feder, he had worked out a programme of twenty-five points, which was to be the unalterable basis of his campaign. That programme, which was made public at a mass-meeting of the party in Munich on February 24th, 1920, has indeed never been altered—except in one point regarding the right of private property—throughout the rise of the National Socialist Party from its insignificant beginning to

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supreme political power. A good many of the provisions laid down in the twenty-five points of 1920, such as the destruction of all Jewish influence, governed the actions of Hitler's Government thirteen years afterwards. Though it is perhaps not quite fair to nail down a successful mass-movement to everything it has said at the beginning of its fight, it may not be without interest to summarize some of the chief points of that 1920 programme and compare them with the party's actions in 1933.

1. All Germans should unite within one comprehensive Germany (a reference to the union of Germany and Austria).

2. Other nations should recognize that the German nation has a claim to equal rights.

3. The Peace Treaties of Versailles and St. Germain should be cancelled.

4. Germany should be given colonies for feeding her people and settling her surplus population.

5. Jews cannot be members of the German nation; they are foreigners living in Germany only as guests, and should be subject to special alien regulations. They should consequently not have the right to vote, nor to hold office in State, provincial or municipal service.

6. All German citizens—i.e. not the Jews—should

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have equal rights and equal duties. The work of every individual must be in harmony with the common weal.

7. The tyranny of interest must be broken, unearned income abolished. (This was the particular idea which Gottfried Feder had introduced to the little party, and although the aims of the movement took an entirely different direction, Feder's point remained in the programme.)

8. All industrial and financial trusts and amalgamations should be nationalized. All large concerns should introduce the principle of profit-sharing. A healthy middle-class should be created and supported; therefore, the large departmental stores should be immediately brought under municipal management and re-let to small retailers.

Point seventeen of the programme demands a thorough land reform, including the confiscation of land for communal purposes—this was later explained to be primarily directed against Jewish firms which speculated in land. With regard to the press, it was demanded that no others than "members of the German nation" should be allowed to be editors or members of the staff of newspapers, nor to have any financial interest in them. In art and literature, any tendencies which exercised a dis-

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integrating influence on German national life should be stamped out with the help of the law. Point twenty-five demands the creation of a strong central government in the Reich, which, with the central parliament, should exercise absolute authority over the whole of the Reich and all its organizations.

It will be seen that thirteen years after this programme was laid down, Hitler was still guided to a large extent by its provisions. In regard to the treatment of Jews, of the press and of literature, the programme has been carried out almost to the letter. The creation of a united, centralized German State, with the Imperial Government in absolute control of the entire country, was also carried out almost exactly on the lines of the programme.

It may be remarked in passing that this programme was conceived two years before Mussolini led Fascism into power in Italy; it is therefore historically incorrect to say that German National Socialism is an imitation of Italian Fascism. What Hitler learnt from the success of the Italian dictator was the method of building up a private army parallel to the political party. The creation of this powerful weapon, which was to become the chief instrument of Hitler's success, was not begun until several years after the foundation of his political

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party. When the "army" was formed, however, Italian experience was thoroughly studied and Fascist examples largely imitated. The staff work of Hitler's movement in the later stages of its rise to power was so remarkable that it may be of interest to describe briefly how this force was organized.

A new party that wanted to become a power in the Republic had to reckon with the determined opposition of several large and highly organized parliamentary parties. It was next to impossible to bring under control the existing parties which had a strong hold on all official and unofficial appointments and were backed by large financial resources. To dislodge large numbers of politically-minded people from these parties was even more difficult. For many years, no group outside these large organizations could gain much numerical strength. When they started to build up their party, Hitler and his friends must have seen that the parliamentary road could lead them nowhere. Moreover, they were on principle opposed to parliamentarism: and they did not believe in the ethical value of establishing power through the democratic poll. Whether for tactical reasons or by conviction, they concentrated on forming a force outside the region of parliamentary parties. They attracted young men who were pre-

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pared to act as stewards at their party meetings, which were often violently disturbed by Communists. After the example of Mussolini's Fascists, the members of this guard were clothed in brown shirts and housed together in certain premises where they would be fed and helped to get employment. What more natural than that many unemployed young men should join a force which, apart from giving them a uniform and the chance of a good fight, was assisting them in finding a means of livelihood.

It was not the first "private army" that made its appearance in German party politics. The Communists had had a long start when the Brown Shirts first appeared. Other parties were following suit, and there were a number of associations like the Stahlhelm, a league of patriotic ex-soldiers, and the large Sports Associations, whose support was eagerly sought by the political parties. The National Socialist party succeeded in time in making their striking force more efficient than those of the rival parties. It may be that they had more ex-officers of the old army instructing and organizing their forces. Perhaps Captain Roehm, Hitler's chief-of-staff, was more ingenious than the commanding officers of the other political "armies". Without doubt, an important factor was that several detachments of the former

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"Free Corps"—well-armed, hardened soldiers of long experience in guerilla fighting—joined Hitler's force in the early years on the advice of their leaders, who intended to use the Nazi movement as a cloak for their own ambitious plans. Moreover, Hitler was certainly the best mass orator amongst German party leaders, and the loyalty that he inspired was remarkable. However that may be, by 1930 the Nazis had succeeded in establishing the Brown Shirts all over the country. The organization was strictly centralized, and Hitler's word was a command which could not be disobeyed without incurring the severest punishment. On the other hand, the force was subdivided into a large number of local groups which had to support the parallel organizations of the political party in their own area. That area was sometimes a whole village or urban borough: more often it was only a block of streets or houses.

This decentralization came to be highly important for the success of the upheaval of 1933. The Brown Shirts of a certain local group knew the character, political views, business and private affairs of every person living in their area. The collection of information about private and political activities of every German citizen was highly en-

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couraged by the Nazi leaders. A member who brought news that a certain man had attended a Communist meeting, or was receiving circulars of the Socialist party, was congratulated on his loyalty to the party. Thus Nazi headquarters succeeded in collecting an enormous mass of information from which the lists were drawn up that enabled them later to eliminate, within a few weeks, every official, civil servant, or holder of any influential position, who was likely to oppose them.

The "Private Army" was, on this local basis, divided into "Storm Detachments" (Sturm-Abteilungen, called S.A.). Although these were at first called up only when a meeting had to be guarded, or a demonstration escorted, part of the force was gradually converted into full-time "soldiers". From their ranks, strong and efficient young men were picked to form "Protection Squadrons" (Schutz-Staffeln, called S.S.), to be used for particularly dangerous tasks. As the force grew, both the S.A. and the S.S. were housed in a kind of barracks, which served also as the local headquarters of the political party. These premises, called "Brown Houses", were usually disused factories or similar buildings. There the party was free from interference; fugitives found shelter, and documents or

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weapons were safe. When in 1931 Dr. Brüning's Government passed a decree prohibiting the wearing of uniforms, it was found that the enforcement of this measure against the Nazi "army" was almost impossible without the employment of armed force, which was more than the Government was prepared to use.

The establishment of the "Brown Houses", the infinite local subdivision of the Nazi troops, and their unconditional allegiance to Hitler himself, were the three pillars of their strength. The other political "armies" may have had the advantage of better men and larger numbers, but only the Communists' "Red Front" was decentralized in the same manner as the Nazi "Storm Detachments", and they lacked the binding element of strong leadership. This difference in the make-up of the rival forces does not explain their unresisting collapse before the Nazi attack during the first few weeks of Hitler's régime, but it goes far to explain how the Nazis succeeded in establishing their intense hold over the entire country.

The political party was organized on similar principles. The smallest unit was the "block", which could be formed by ten members living within a certain street or group of houses. The next larger

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unit was the "cell" comprising five "blocks". Several "cells" would then be co-ordinated in a local branch. Each unit had its leader, who was directly responsible to Hitler, and who must be unconditionally obeyed. Associated with the leader of the local branch was a staff of officers, appointed and controlled by party headquarters. One of these officers was in charge of propaganda, and his position was recognized to be very important. There were a number of larger units comprising several local and provincial branches. Near the top of the pyramid were nine inspection boards, each of which had absolute disciplinary power over every member and official in his province. Lastly, there was the party headquarters in Munich, housed in a fine building for which Hitler himself designed the interior decoration with considerable artistic success.

Headquarters was divided into several departments; one for industry, one for agriculture, another for the organization of "works cells", and yet another for party discipline. The last named department had to advise and control not only the political and military organizations of the party, but the large numbers of professional and private Nazi associations which were springing up in every region of national life. There was, for instance, an "associa-

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tion of National Socialist lawyers", others of schoolmasters, of physicians, and so on. The study of political affairs and of the work of local government also came under this important department.

It took Hitler and his collaborators almost ten years to build up this formidable organization which, in the end, covered the length and breadth of the country and spread its tentacles into every conceivable branch of public life. The plan which enabled them to reach such a position was, however, laid down quite early in the history of the movement. It was the ingenuity of this conception and the efficiency with which it was carried out that built up the power of National Socialism. Yet without the remarkable loyalty of the entire movement to the person of Adolf Hitler, and without the leader's extraordinary ability to settle disputes and to overcome differences of opinion or interests, the party would have been broken up long ago and divided into rival factions, as all the other German parties were.

It must not be forgotten that the members of the Nazi movement were drawn, not from one class or persuasion, but from the most varied sources. There were ex-soldiers who liked the military note in the proceedings of the party; there were civil servants

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of the lower grades and tradesmen who had lost all during the inflation and who hoped for a return of former prosperity by the restoration of pre-war glory. There were many workers who, holding socialist views, were disappointed with the meekness of the Social Democratic Party and hoped that Hitler would fight their battle better than the "Marxists" had done. There were large numbers of unemployed who would have joined any movement which promised an early and violent change, but who despised the Communists for their allegiance to Soviet Russia. There was, in fact, a steady flow of members from the Communist to the Nazi party; though from time to time the reverse tendency was equally noticeable. Then there was the important element of small peasants who were groaning under the weight of the agricultural crisis, and who joined the movement because it promised to free them from the burden of interest payments. All these were united in the desire for a complete change, whatever its direction. They had not the slightest interest in the continuance of existing conditions, and were too desperate to believe that the existing State—that "neutral", detached, cautious Weimar Republic—could bring about any improvement by constitutional means. They were further united by

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a deep-felt Nationalism which became increasingly militant as time went on. When it began to succeed, large sections of the people joined the Nazi movement because of its Nationalist appeal without having any liking for the strongly socialist side of its programme. Thus the party was swelled (and partly financed) by industrialists who were determined to use it as a weapon against the power of the Socialists in politics and in industry.

From the beginning the Nazis had directed their attack mainly on Socialists and Communists, and they denounced not only the political system which gave considerable power to Labour, but also the activities of the socialist trade unions, which seemed to them to be chiefly responsible for the deplorable division of the nation into opposing classes. To bridge the gulf between capital and labour by bringing both under the firm authority of the State was one of the many points of the Nazi programme. The industrialists who supported the movement did not trouble about the Nazi Super-State—which they believed would never come—but they welcomed their fight against trade union power. It is possible that Hitler would have succeeded in building up a powerful party even without financial support from industrial interests, but there is no doubt

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that the money and influence which he derived from them were a source of great strength.

In view of the many classes and traditions from which the Nazi supporters were drawn, it is not surprising that the party had to overcome repeated crises, and that there were at all times conflicts of interests at work within the party which tended to draw its policy in opposite directions. Between the Conservative and Fascist side of the movement, which had caused the industrialists to support it, and the Socialist side, which had drawn great masses of workers and unemployed into its fold, there was only one bridge: the loyalty to the leader. He succeeded again and again in avoiding a threatened split—sometimes by the expulsion of rebels, however prominent, and sometimes by deflecting the course of his policy towards the side which was temporarily the stronger. Thus the movement had been successively emphasizing the nationalist, fascist, anti-socialist, conservative and socialist elements of its scheme. It needed a supremely elastic mind to retain the main current in spite of many deflecting influences. The same task rises before Hitler now that he has led his movement into political power. In order to keep conflicting tendencies quiet for a while, militant Nationalism can be held in the fore-

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front. In the long run it will be necessary for Hitler to show his hand in the social and economic problems which cannot be solved in a way equally satisfactory to conservative industrialists and socialist workmen. Whether he will succeed again in finding a common denominator, and to which of these two sides his policy will lean more strongly, it is too early to say; but in judging the present German situation the composite character of the Nazi movement should always be kept in mind.

The rise of the National Socialist movement was phenomenal. As already pointed out, when Adolf Hitler joined the movement it had six members; within three years it had several hundreds of thousands and Hitler could impress an experienced judge of power like General Ludendorff with the importance of his organization. Hitler had at that time conceived the idea of overthrowing the Democratic Republic in Bavaria, hoping that all the elements of opposition in the Reich, including the army, would then revolt against the Republican central government. There had been during the year 1923 several attempts of this nature, coming mainly from military quarters and culminating in a refusal of the Munich division of the regular army to obey the orders of the central government. Hitler, who was then hardly

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known to the public, thought the moment propitious for determined action. He persuaded General Ludendorff to lend his great reputation to the rebellion. He kidnapped the heads of the Bavarian Government into a mass-meeting of his party, and forced them there and then at the point of revolvers to declare that they would support the revolt. Next day, Adolf Hitler collected his troops and led them towards the seat of the Munich Government. General Ludendorff in frock-coat and top-hat marched at the head of the column. By that time, however, the Bavarian Government had reconsidered its position; if there was to be a rebellion against Berlin, they intended to carry it out themselves. So Hitler's procession was met by a strong police force which fired at them with machine-guns; and within a few seconds, everybody had either fled or thrown himself on the ground. The rebellion, instead of ending in a triumphal march on Berlin, was quelled after the first half mile of marching by a single volley. Only the solitary black figure of General Ludendorff was seen marching on unconcernedly. The General was arrested, and so was Hitler with his chief lieutenants.

Then came a time of depression for the Nazis. Their leader was detained in a military prison, and

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the population recoiled from the violent methods which the party had practised. As soon as Hitler returned, however, he redoubled his efforts, and succeeded in re-establishing the movement more strongly than ever. The abortive rebellion of 1923 had convinced Hitler of the necessity for confining his programme of action to legal and constitutional methods and thereby he enabled the party to recruit large sections of the population who would have hung back from an organization which openly advocated a *coup d'état*. The misery of the inflation period provided Hitler with an unexampled opportunity for such recruitment. The growing severity of economic depression and unemployment helped him on. As early as the Reichstag election of May 1928, the National Socialist Party polled eight hundred thousand votes, and gained twelve seats. The superior organization of the party also began to tell. In September 1930, they polled no less than six million four hundred thousand votes, and gained one hundred and seven seats.

The election of 1930 showed Hitler and his party for the first time as a real power in the State, and people within and without the German frontiers began to take it seriously. Hitler had by now grown with his task, and he could no longer be disregarded

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by the Government. In fact, when Dr. Brüning, on behalf of the Catholic Party, formed his Government in 1930, he made an earnest attempt, frequently repeated afterwards, to induce Hitler to join his Cabinet and bring his party into the government coalition. He found Hitler evasive and full of suspicion, which even the overwhelming sincerity of Brüning could not overcome. Hitler rightly judged that he was still stronger in opposition than he would have been in office. When a Presidential election was held in March 1932, and Hitler was put up as candidate in opposition to Hindenburg, he received no less than eleven million three hundred thousand votes. In the second ballot which followed a month later, he polled thirteen million four hundred thousand, amounting to nearly thirty-seven per cent of the votes given. Next summer, when Herr von Papen had just formed his Nationalist Government and had taken much wind out of the Nazi sails, Hitler succeeded in polling thirteen million seven hundred thousand votes, and his party was now the largest in the State. It was obvious that no government could carry on without drawing him into the realm of power in one way or another. But he was already thinking of sole political control rather than of a

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share in responsibility. Von Papen at first failed, just as Brüning had failed, to reconcile the largest party with the State. It was only when General von Schleicher had made an unsuccessful attempt to rule without Nazi support that von Papen tried once more: and this time he succeeded. It is unnecessary now to consider whether the Nazi movement, which had already begun to decline, would have lost influence as rapidly as it had gained it if the Nationalists had held out a little longer. Once the door was opened, the Nazis swept in with full force, and they were soon irremovably established.

VII

MANY RIVERS

Within the flood which swept Germany in the spring of 1933 there were merged the waters of many streams. It is necessary to differentiate between the Nationalist revolt against German humiliation which found expression in the denunciation of the Peace Treaties, and which was shared by almost the entire German nation, and the ideas and aims of the National Socialist Party which were, to a large extent, in strong contrast to the attitude of the majority. It has been shown in a previous chapter that even the particular aims of the Nazis found a certain amount of general sympathy, mainly because German political and economic developments had reached a point where large sections of the people were eager for a change at any price. Yet the Nazis in power have not been content to carry out their programme to the extent to which it was widely approved. They have gone

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to the very extreme of consistency by putting into force one point after the other of their programme. As time goes on, moderating influences may conceivably prevail upon them to modify their methods, but there can be little doubt that they will not materially swerve from the course which they have set for themselves. Their ideas will be the foundation of German policy for some time to come; we shall, therefore, now turn to a brief analysis of the planks of the Nazi platform.

The foremost idea of National Socialism is the creation of a strong State. In the words of Dr. Goebbels, the Nazi Minister for Propaganda, "at the end of the revolution stands the first German Nation-State, which comprises within its sphere all classes, professions, callings, tribes and confessions, and which will be the vessel of the unified German people." The State has to be stronger than any other power in the country; stronger than classes, religions, vested interests and political parties. There is to be no unit of political power or influence between the State and the individual—except the National Socialist Party which is to be "identified" with the State. Trade unions and employers' organizations will be organized and controlled by the State, which reserves the absolute right to decide

disputes according to the national interest. Even such organizations as the Masonic Lodges are contrary to this idea of the all-pervading State, as they assume the power to prescribe a certain attitude to their members, which results in a limitation of the influence of the State. Schools and universities are also to be brought under the sole control of the State, which alone decides the aims and direction of education.

Moreover, the super-state derives its power not from the people by way of a democratic election, but from its leader, Adolf Hitler, as the head of the National Socialist Party. When Captain Goering presented himself to the Prussian Diet as the newly appointed Prime Minister, he emphasized that he held his position by reason of the confidence of his leader, and that "the confidence of Adolf Hitler is the source of the activities of the Prussian Government". Here, then, is realized one of the fundamental ideas of National Socialism: the principle of "authority".¹ This will be carried through every

¹ The loyalty to Hitler is largely an artificial plant, carefully nursed by the leading group, but nevertheless powerful. He is not *really* a dictator, nor has he *really* (i.e. apart from constitutional theory) autocratic powers. It is the principle of authority that matters, and the authoritative state must be led by a person with wide authority. From there to autocracy is a wide step.

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part of national organization, replacing democratic institutions and majority decisions within the State, as well as in the economic and social organizations of the community. It is on the principle of leadership and obedience that the Nazi Party has been based from its origin, and here as in other points, it meets the old Prussian tradition of authority which Hegel raised to the dignity of a philosophical system, and which only last year was officially declared to be the aim of government policy by the "Junker Cabinet" of Herr von Papen.

In yet another field the ideas of National Socialism are closely related to Prussian traditions. In pre-war Prussia, the civil servant was, next to the landholder and the soldier, the most respected and most influential character in the State. The Prussian civil service was certainly remarkable in its almost religious devotion to duty, in its personal and official thrift, and in its absolute incorruptibility. Its members were, as a general rule, not in the least concerned with making money: they had such a contempt for material wealth that they regarded even the most eminent industrialist as a second-rate man who polluted himself by making money. The rare appreciation of good service shown by a promotion, a decoration, or the "mentioning in reports", was

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all the reward that this poorly-paid but highly efficient service ever desired. The National Socialists are voluble in their admiration for the old Prussian civil servant and hold him up to the present generation as a shining example of the ideal citizen. They intend the spirit of public service, the spirit of unselfish devotion to the State, of indifference to material comforts, and of unfaltering discipline, to pervade all classes of the nation in its private as well as in its professional life.

It is obvious that such an ideal cannot be realized within a system of democratic parliamentarism. The National Socialists have indeed opposed parliamentarism from the earliest days of their existence. Many of their followers could see only the need for a change where the young and inexperienced German parliamentarism was leading to national disintegration and corruption. The leaders, however, always fought parliamentarism on principle, because they envisaged an "authoritative State" in which there was no room for the decisive power of parliamentary democracy. If, after a few years of obstruction, they concentrated their efforts on winning a parliamentary majority, which according to their views should not be important to them, it was partly for tactical reasons, but partly—

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from a sense of legality that they took this round-about way to their goal. Perhaps it should be emphasized that Adolf Hitler himself was the strongest upholder of this policy of legality, while many of his collaborators would have yielded more than once to the temptation of seizing power by force. Hitler was too deeply impressed with the curse of its revolutionary origin which burdened the Weimar Republic. He had also learnt his lesson from the failure of his abortive rebellion of 1923. Several years ago, when he gave evidence before the Supreme Court on the aims of the National Socialist Party, he stated that he would never consider any other than legal means to obtain power. When he said, almost in the same breath, that after the victory of the Nazi movement there would be "heads rolling in the sand", he was universally derided, and few were prepared to believe the first part of his statement. Events have shown that Hitler meant both parts seriously. He held to his course up to the point of waiting for a mandate of the democratic electorate before he proceeded to abolish both democracy and elections. This instinct of abstract legality, followed in spite of many temptations throughout many years, is doubtless one of the deepest strains in Hitler's character, and

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it should play an important part in his foreign policy.

The Nazi State provides no place for the expression of disputes between class interests. Class warfare, as a political factor, is to be eliminated and both capital and labour are placed under the stern authority of the State. Trade unions, as organizations of the working class aiming at the exercise of collective power within the State, will not be tolerated; nor will the Nazis recognize the right of employers of labour to organize for a similar purpose. The seizure of the trade union organizations and the confiscation of their property may have been, at least partly, caused by the desire to destroy one of the last strongholds of potential opposition. But apart from this tactical reason it is an essential part of the Nazi scheme to substitute State-controlled corporations for class organizations. Where these plans are leading to is shown by the corporative system of Italian Fascism. No doubt the Nazis will be guided by the experience of Fascism, though up to the present they have made very little headway with this most difficult task. It may be remarked in passing that the idea of corporative organizations as a partial foundation of governmental power has long been discussed in Germany; it

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was earnestly considered even by the Socialists when, after the war, they built up the new Republic. It is, therefore, not a strange idea to the German people, although the extreme way in which the Nazis intend to realize it will arouse considerable opposition. In practice, the scheme is to be based on five vertical unions—called "*Stände*"—for industry, handicrafts, agriculture, commerce, and the professions. Each union is to comprise both employers and employees, both being controlled by State officials, whose decision in all trade disputes is final and binding. This system cuts across the rival organizations of labour and capital by avoiding organized contact between either workers or employers except within the limits of a particular trade or profession. It will certainly debar unions from exercising any political influence or supporting any political party. It is hoped that the members of a certain corporation, employers and employees, will eventually acquire a new common loyalty to their own trade or profession, instead of their present loyalty towards their respective classes. Thus the nightmare of class warfare is to be eliminated. To assist in this process a horizontal organization called the German labour front is to combine all sections of the people engaged in the process of production

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under the leadership of a member of the government.

It needs to be said that in Germany, in contrast to Italy, institutions for co-operation between capital and labour within a certain trade are already in existence, as are also State organs for arbitration in industrial disputes. Even the legal power of the State—in the persons of arbitration commissioners, or, in the last resort, the Minister of Labour—to give binding decisions in the case of a settlement not being accepted by one of the parties, has been in existence for years. The Nazis are thus building on foundations which have been laid by their predecessors.

It is a doubtful question which only events can solve, whether the National Socialist Party is as determined in its hostility to capitalism as it is in its hostility to parliamentary democracy. It will certainly uphold the principle of private property. But it does not recognize the right of capitalists to employ their capital indiscriminately. Thus some of the strongest manifestations of capitalism, such as industrial amalgamations, price conventions, and departmental stores are sternly disapproved of. The Nazi Government has announced that the power of such large economic combinations will be broken; that

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departmental stores will be closed and their premises re-let to small retailers; that price conventions will in future need the approval of the State, which will exercise strict supervision; that the working of industrial amalgamations contains a menace to the complete superiority of the State which will be met by stern measures of official intervention. We are discussing, it should be remembered, ideas, not achievements. With regard to finance, the Nazis are determined to prevent it from concentrating controlling power over trade and industry within a few large institutions. Since the banking crisis of 1931, more than half the capital of the big German banks has already come under the control of the Reich, which has exercised a strong influence on their policy. Indeed, the predecessors of Hitler have most strongly interfered with the freedom of finance—for instance, by a compulsory reduction of all interest rates, or by various measures to prevent foreclosure on farms. A banking reform was, in fact, well under way when Hitler became Chancellor. But whether he will decisively influence its course according to the Nazi programme of abolishing all big banks, it is impossible to foresee. Much will depend on the outcome of the struggle between the various sections of the National Social-

ist Party. After the first revolutionary wave the government had to call a halt to further experiments in socialism, and it is hard to foresee whether the struggle will be resumed in the near future.

The Constitution of Weimar was "neutral" towards the convictions and opinions of the German citizens. Apart from the fact that it gave complete liberty of thought to all, it deliberately refrained from influence or interference in intellectual, religious and political convictions. The State which the legislators of Weimar had in mind was to give equal protection to all movements which any German thought right to support, so long as they did not threaten the existence of the nation. Such neutrality is entirely foreign to the Nazi conception of the State. They assert that the Weimar Constitution was a supreme realization of the idea of "relativity", which they condemn. They point to the misuse of civil liberty by movements which were directed against the very existence of the German nation; by that they mean chiefly the literary school of pacifism. It is one of the tragedies of recent years that the pacifist movement in Germany was mixed up with a group of writers who had lost all touch with national feeling and pursued their abstract political fancies to the point of being definitely anti-German. The

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honesty of these writers is not doubted, but they were labouring under a confusion of values. When Nationalism grew stronger it could not but condemn these influences which were holding up the recuperation of national pride. It should be understood that the term pacifism, by the fault of the pacifists themselves, has come to mean in German thought a mentality which is not moved by religious abhorrence of all war but which is opposing the German revival for reasons of party politics or class consciousness to the point of abandoning the interests of its country and sympathizing with anti-German policies of foreign countries. The Nazis—as many others beside them—took the view that such a mentality was undermining public morale, and their hostility to pacifism is largely based on this opinion.

Nazi hostility to the liberal Constitution of Weimar, however, is really more profound. The Nazis cannot visualize a State which is merely a frame for a mass of living formations within its frontiers. The State, as they mean it to be, should deliberately interfere not only with the economic and political activities of its citizens but with their intellectual and religious life. Moved by the idea that the individual acquires value and importance only by

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being a member of a Nation-State, the Nazis want the State to exercise a strong influence on everyone of the sixty-five million Germans. In their view, civil rights are not as important as civil duties, and liberty should be replaced by service. These ideas bear a strong resemblance to pre-war Prussianism; but it would be unsafe to assume that the National Socialists are merely steering towards a restoration of that tradition. Here, as in other directions, it is not true that Germany is putting the clock back in the sense of re-establishing a former system. Whether it will eventually be re-established after a fierce struggle with the present rulers is another question; but there can be no doubt that nothing is farther from the mind of the Nazi leaders than the idea of a State in which big landowners and generals play the predominant role. In one respect, however, there appears to be a definite return to pre-war traditions: in the position of women in the Nazi State. It was only during the last decade that German women really succeeded in throwing off the remnants of the old tradition that a woman's place is in the home. "Kinder, Küche, Kirche"—children, kitchen, church—were said to be the limits of feminine activity, and on the whole the German woman had obeyed that unwritten law,

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until the post-war generation of girls took to sport, politics, and an independent livelihood. Now this progress is to be reversed. It is not merely for economic reasons that women are exhorted or forced to give up commercial employment and to make room for men. In the background lies the idea that women are not made for liberty and independence, that they should obey the commands of Man, and that their duty is to marry, bear children, and tend their households. There is to be no room for women in politics and public service. Their social life will be severely limited by stern orders for modesty and "womanly" behaviour. If present plans are carried out, the state will interfere with the private lives of women to the extent of deciding whom they may or may not marry. Legal marriage, it seems, is to be made conditional on the permission of a medical authority which keeps watch over the "preservation of the race".

There is one problem which will provide a test case for all foreign observers of the German upheaval. The National Socialists have given it out as their earnest determination to carry out a land reform in the near future. If they succeed—where all German governments since the war have failed—in dividing up the large bankrupt estates in the east

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of Germany for the purpose of settling small peasant owners, they will have proved that they are more modernist than reactionary, and that their Socialist convictions are able to withstand the tremendous impact of the historical forces of Prussian tradition. True, the first offensive has already failed, but it will very probably be repeated.

A fascinating theory has lately found wide currency in Germany: that the policy of a country is determined by its geographical position to a much greater extent than was hitherto believed. Thus it is said that only a country which is surrounded by water can realize its historical destiny without a strong, centralized, cast-iron State. Great Britain, for instance, in the minds of her people is clearly defined and marked off from other countries by the sea that surrounds her. Germany, on the other hand, is not so defined by nature. Her people will, as they have indeed done throughout the centuries, lose consciousness of their national identity whenever there is no strong German State to bind them together. What the sea does for Britain only a strong State can do for Germany, runs the thesis.

The theory itself is neither the invention nor the monopoly of the National Socialists, the school of "Geopolitics" having long ago found entrance into

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German universities, periodicals and newspapers without regard to party adherence. It is, however, essential to the National Socialist conception of the State. If, since it came into power, the party has made the greatest efforts to assert the authority of the State over every conceivable branch of national life, it was not only moved by the desire to consolidate its power and to destroy all potential opposition; it was also fulfilling a vital part of its programme. Hitler and his friends believe that Germany cannot, in a Europe of strongly Nationalist countries, regain her greatness, except in the form of a clearly defined, all-pervading, overruling State, which is to provide the spiritual as well as the political centre of gravity for the German race.

If it is admitted that Germany needs such a State as much as France—who created it more than a century ago—it is evident that the pre-war conception of a State in which certain classes held a predominating position while other classes were barely recognized as full citizens, is not sufficient for this purpose. If the Socialists before the war were denounced as “men without a country” (*Vaterlandslose Gesellen*), the German State was obviously not pervading all classes of the people but was content to

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exercise influence merely on a section of it. To such a conception the National Socialists, in spite of their violent fight against the "Marxists", are in theory strongly opposed. Their State is to be identical with the whole of the people without difference of classes. It is to establish, and to keep with a firm hand, a just balance between the conflicting interests of all the elements which compose the nation. This idea of a "National Community" (*Volksgemeinschaft*) is perhaps the most important of the motives determining National Socialist policy. It aims at welding together all the elements of the nation into a single, solid whole. The unitarian, totalistic idea of the State is thereby coupled with a definitely democratic conception. It is this combination which distinguishes National Socialism from the Prussianism of pre-war days, as well as from the Communist idea of a proletarian State as realized in Russia, in both of which a certain class is the primary bearer of the State and the main source of power.

The fact that the National Socialists have used methods of compulsion very similar to those of pre-war Prussianism which turned world opinion against Germany, has led many observers to jump to the conclusion that Prussianism in its

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most oppressive form has returned, and that the old spirit of overbearance and national pride might once again eventually become an international danger. This conclusion is not only based on an error, but it becomes a positive danger to the delicate balance of international peace. The difference between the present German mood and pre-war Prussian ideas lies in its democratic element and in its conception of State Socialism, neither of which can be disregarded without a complete misunderstanding of the German situation.

It was perhaps inevitable that the plan for a unitarian German State should lead to a revival of interest in the millions of people of German race and language who are living outside the present frontiers of Germany. It was indeed one of the first points of the Nazi programme of 1920 that the people of Austria should one day be included in the German system. This has been an ambition of German politicians and writers ever since the Holy Roman Empire, with its centre at Vienna, lapsed over a century ago. The German part of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy has always been regarded as an integral section of the German nation, and the fact that the "double monarchy" gravitated too heavily towards its Magyar and Slav sections to

allow a close political connection with the gradually evolving Reich never for any length of time made a difference to the popular feeling of racial unity. When during the first half of the nineteenth century unitarian ideas gained strength in Germany they invariably included Austria within the conception of a reconstructed German Empire. In fact, the famous song "*Deutschland über Alles*", which arose during revolutionary attempts of German student movements to create an all-Germany above the ant-heap of particularist German States, deliberately included Austria within the territory in which "Germany should rule over all". When at the end of the war the Hapsburg Empire broke up and its German section remained alone in the form of the present Austria, the chief obstruction to an inclusion of Austria in the Reich had disappeared, and it seemed to most Germans to be a natural sequence that Austria should now return to the fold of the German tribes.

The desire for a union between Germany and Austria has its origin not in politics but in national feeling. Until recently it was, indeed, desired by a majority in both countries. On the other hand, the objection raised by France and supported by Italy against such a union has purely political motives.

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An inclusion of Austria within the Reich would extend Germany's frontiers far into the precarious huddle of small Balkan States in south-eastern Europe and right to the borders of Italy. The European balance of power would thereby be profoundly altered. The "French belt" of allies along the Eastern frontiers of Germany would be perceptibly weakened, and Italy's position disturbed by the appearance of a great power on her Northern frontier. The potential dangers to peace involved in such a change are indeed many and serious. Yet it would be less than fair to demand that the Germans should give up the hope of union with Austria because of French and Italian objections.

There is another element in National Socialism which has profoundly disturbed opinion in foreign countries: that is the spirit of militarism which pervades the speeches as well as the actions of the present rulers of Germany. There is no doubt that ideas of soldierly prowess have been an essential feature of the growth of the Nazi party: but it is not so certain that the effect of this tendency is identical with the accepted conception of militarism. Anyone who has visited Germany during the last few years must have been impressed by the omnipresence of columns of marching youths, clad in various kinds

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of uniform, following flags and military bands. To a large extent this state of affairs arose from the methods of political parties who created "private armies" for the protection of their meetings and as an attraction to young partisans. But although the intention was certainly not military, the fact that uniforms, bands and manœuvres were regarded as a sure draw for the young shows that the attitude of a soldier had become dear to young Germany.

Apart from the political armies, associations were springing up everywhere for the purpose of collecting boys and youths in formations and for activities somewhat similar to those of the army. In addition, it was dinned into the ears of youth through the medium of schools, universities, newspapers, plays, films and political speeches that to be a fighting man was the finest status a German could achieve. It is only natural that the military authorities greatly commended this development and supported it wherever possible. To a small degree semi-military formations were even created and guided by military circles. On the whole, however, this movement came into existence independent of the army and the State. It arose originally from the newly formed habit of German youth to live in isolation from, and even in opposition to, the older

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generation; a habit which had its roots in the pre-war youth movement, and had from the beginning taken the form of open-air meetings and walking tours. To the "wanderers" of pre-war days it would have appeared a deadly insult if anyone had suggested that they were fathered by the State for military purposes. Nothing indeed pleased them more than the fact that their organizations were often prohibited in State-aided schools. The spirit of opposition to established institutions faded a little when the movement expanded into a mass-movement; but even then the so-called "class-consciousness of youth" was the chief motive behind the activities of the young men. In these formations originated the spirit of practical democracy, of indifference to class distinctions in the face of a common ideal, which so largely pervades young Germany to-day.

If, at the same time, the soldierly spirit was increasingly valued by the members, and even more by the leaders and supporters of these associations, the cause was not so much a desire to overcome national humiliation by establishing a large potential army which might one day be used to break the chains of the Versailles Treaty—although in periods following military defeat great value is always

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attached to physical prowess as a proof that defeat did not result in dishonour; the real cause of the emergence of a soldierly spirit was the widespread feeling that Germany was being allowed to disintegrate in a moral as well as in a political sense by the "weakness" of the Liberal Republic.

There is a deep strain in the German character which leads to romantic dreaming and easy assimilation of outside influence. As a protection, the German has developed a craving for discipline which counteracts the desire for dissemination. Thus the feeling that Germany was dangerously weakened by internal dissensions produced what is now called the "*Wehrgeist*", a word which is untranslatable but which means roughly the spirit of discipline. The fact that the word "Wehr" is an ancient German term for arms has led many foreign observers to the conclusion that whenever the "*Wehrgeist*" is cited, a longing to bear arms is expressed. This is a confusion of two vastly different trains of thought. Whereas, as a matter of foreign policy, the Germans certainly desire to have strong armaments in order to feel that the stain of inequality is removed from their nation, the spirit of discipline and obedience which prevails in the semi-military associations has very little to do with either foreign policy or arms.

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Indeed, if the current accusation that these associations are merely furtive attempts to circumvent the military stipulations of the Peace Treaty is fiercely rejected and resented by the members of these formations themselves, it is not foreign affairs with which they are concerned, but the feeling that the essence of their movement is unappreciated. Their militarism is worlds apart from the militarism of Prussian generals, who may perhaps think in terms of preparing human material for eventual use in a future German army. It is probably true that the support which the State lends to all forms of physical training is partly influenced by such ideas. It is equally true that the present German Government thinks less on such lines than several of its predecessors. The anxiety for the moral and physical health of a young generation which is suffering from the dangerous consequences of unemployment has led every German Government of recent years to support the private associations which at least keep the young men out of mischief and provide an opportunity for healthy open-air exercise. Admittedly this is not the only reason for German Governments supporting efforts at physical training; they are welcomed also for the patriotic spirit with which they inculcate large sections of the younger generation

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and for the spirit of obedience to authority which they deliberately promote. Purely military considerations, however, are secondary; and they are even less important for the National Socialist Government than they were for the preceding two governments of Prussian Junkers and Generals.

A characteristic example of the mixture of ideas which has gone into the present form of German militarism is the newly created plan for a compulsory labour service. According to the present scheme, about six hundred thousand men will be called up each year, and concentrated in a number of labour camps. They will undergo a certain amount of disciplinary drill and physical training; they will wear uniforms and live together either in improvised barracks or in camp huts. Their work will be mainly connected with the building of roads and bridges, the digging of canals, and the reclamation of moorland. As there are about seventy-five million acres of land waiting to be either drained or irrigated, there is no danger that the work under this service will directly compete with normal economic employment. With the question of finance we are not concerned in this connection. The problem is whether the semi-military training of more than half a million young men each year

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is, either by intention or by results, a matter of militarism. Now it is a curious fact that the idea of concentrating young men for a certain period in country camps was first conceived by people of vaguely communist tendencies immediately after the war. In one form or another, the scheme played its part in the programme of many left-wing movements. They hoped that the concentration of the youth of all classes in healthy manual labour would not only counteract the moral devastation of the war but provide a melting-pot for the various classes of the nation and thus prepare the future "classless" society which they envisaged. A good deal of this idea has been retained throughout the transformations which the labour service scheme has undergone before it reached its present stage. Several years ago the scheme was initiated by the State on a voluntary basis for periods of six weeks only. More than a hundred thousand young men must have gone through labour camps before this year's revolution. The Communists participated in the service with the same enthusiasm as the other parties, including the National Socialists. Hitler has merely seized ideas and tendencies which were already generally accepted, and speeded up their development. Here again, idealistic trends are closely mingled

with considerations of State and of militarism.

While it is impossible to deny that Germany is at present ringing with military ideas and forms, it is essential to remember that this is not a generals' militarism such as existed in Germany before the war, but a popular, democratic militarism of a character novel to Germany. Even if these currents are considered from the constitutional point of view, it must be admitted that the influence of the regular army on government policy is very much weaker than it has ever been during the last sixty years, if a short interval immediately after the war be disregarded. It is true that the army remains a political factor of considerable power even under Hitler's dictatorial rule; but if the British disarmament proposals are carried into effect and the German Reichswehr transformed into a short-service militia, the army is bound to lose much of its strength as an independent power within the State. It may be doubted whether popular enthusiasm for soldiery is a much better guarantee of peace than the rule of generals. Yet it is of the essence of the new Germany that her militarism is indivisibly connected with the vast scheme of national reconstruction which has now been started, and which will not be even partly completed for a considerable number of years.

VIII

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It cannot yet be foreseen whether the National Socialist movement will represent more than a transitional element in German history. But there is no doubt about the permanence of at least one of its achievements: the creation of a centralized German State. It is true that the process of "*Gleichschaltung*", or political co-ordination, by which the new state was built up, was in the first place intended to help the National Socialist Party to obtain control over all Germany. But the idea of a centralized State had always been part of the National Socialist programme and had been kept up even during the period when the animosity of the Southern States against Prussia made anyone who advocated centralization highly unpopular. It may seem as if the new unification of Germany was merely a by-product of National Socialist dictatorship which might disappear after the enthusiasm of

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the revolutionary period had ebbed; but it should be kept in mind that this constitutional change is in line with a long tradition of German history.

The best minds of Germany have always longed for unity. There is a continuous chain of events marking the gradual progress towards that goal for more than a century. If the unification of Germany, which Napoleon attempted without success and Bismarck achieved only partially, was carried out by the National Socialist Party almost without opposition, the reason was that history had prepared the ground and the time was ripe. The historical nature of this change can only be realized when the previous attempts are recalled.

As long as Germany was divided up into three hundred and sixty principalities and was dominated by the Habsburgs, whose dynastic interests were predominantly non-German, the possibility of unification remained but a distant dream. The Settlement of Vienna in 1815 somewhat simplified the problem. Even the legitimism of the Holy Alliance could not re-establish all the petty thrones of the three hundred and sixty sovereigns whom the rude hand of the Corsican had unseated. The German confederation of 1815 consisted of thirty-nine states only.

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Far from establishing a National State in Germany, the Settlement of Vienna only made the particularism of the southern states stronger. Those Nationalists like Humboldt, Stein and Hardenberg, who had hoped that out of the travail of the war of liberation would be born a united Germany, were sadly disappointed. They found themselves confronted with the dynastic policy of the Habsburgs, whose desire to maintain the hegemony in Germany had by no means vanished with the abolition of the Holy Roman Empire.

In the discussions at Frankfurt in 1848 when, if at any time, there was a possibility of a Liberal evolution of a German National State, the dynastic claims of the different German Princes again stood in the way. The most important step towards unification was later taken by Prussia when, after the Austrian war of 1866, she annexed Schleswig, Holstein, Hanover, Nassau, and Electoral Hesse. But the North German Confederation, which was the first nucleus of an all-German State, had not only to take note of the dynastic particularism of the States but in effect to guarantee and perpetuate it. In one respect, however, Bismarck's action was revolutionary, and laid the foundation of all later developments. He created a National Parliament, chosen

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by universal manhood suffrage. For the first time in history, an institution representing the whole of the German people was called into existence. It is necessary to emphasize that the constitutional authority of the National Socialist régime is based on, and arises from, the verdict of an electorate which Bismarck created as a visible symbol of German nationality and as a counterpoise to the narrow dynasticism of the rulers. In that very real sense, the unification of Germany which Hitler carried out is a direct and logical outcome of Bismarck's policy in 1867.

But even in 1871, when Bismarck negotiated with the ministers of the South German States at Versailles, the forces opposed to national solidarity were extremely powerful. At every turn he was met by the demands of men like Mittnacht and Suckow, who were fighting to safeguard the historic rights of their masters, while by a curious irony of fate the interests of autocratic Prussia had come to be equated with the solidarity of the German people. The German Reich of 1871 had to enshrine and guarantee the dynastic principle and the independence of the Sovereign States, and to create a constitution in which the balance of power rested with the states, and not with the people. The men who had visual-

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ized a unified Nation-State were again disappointed, and Treitschke had to find consolation in the fact that the Reich, although federal in form, was unitarian in fact as a result of the scarcely veiled dominance of Prussia.

It is against this historical background that Hitler's unification of Germany has to be viewed. The authority which the Reichstag vested in the Chancellor by its own abdication is such as no monarch or minister ever enjoyed before in Germany. The autocracy of Frederick the Second was confined to Prussia, the authority of Bismarck was limited by the prerogative of the sovereign, the rights of the Reichstag, and the jealousies of the States. Hitler exercises an authority which in extent and character is greater than Frederick the Second ever desired, or Bismarck even in the height of his ambition ever dreamed of. But if this concentration of power in the hands of one man was necessary for the success of unification, it represents only one side of constitutional reform. The other, and perhaps the more important side, is the abolition of a German federation divided into many states.

By the act of co-ordination, which is to be the basis of the new constitution, the former states are reduced to the position of administrative units under

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governors nominated by the central government and responsible to it. Their Governments now derive their power exclusively from the Reich Government, and their diets have become advisory rather than legislative bodies. Prussia is tied even closer to the Reich by a personal union between the offices of the Reich Chancellor and the Prussian Governor. More significant still, no less than seventeen constituent states have been grouped together under one Governor, so that only eleven Governorships remain. The old dream of a united German State has at last been translated into reality.

That in states like Bavaria and Württemberg where monarchist feeling has always been strong and whose people have taken pride in their historical identity, there should have been so little opposition to the change has surprised many political observers in Germany as well as abroad. The explanation is not difficult. The desire for national unity is deep-rooted in German history; yet at every turn when it seemed to be within reach a cruel and malicious fate appeared to intervene. But the desire for unification had only grown in strength the longer it had been delayed. The main obstacle to its realization lay in the historic dynasties which ruled the States. By dispossessing the dynasties, the Weimar Constitution

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of 1919 rendered the division of Germany into small states politically meaningless and administratively ridiculous. The maintenance of petty States with their Governments and Parliaments became an unnecessary, and at times expensive, duplication of political machinery, and it was widely felt that whatever might be the special position of Bavaria, Saxony and Württemberg, there was no valid reason for the continuance of the minor states as independent units of the Federation.

Even Bavarian particularism, which has historically and politically a significance entirely of its own, had to some extent been discredited by the sporadic attempts made at different times to discuss separation from the Reich and union with Austria as a separate political entity. Such a movement would have been resisted by the entire Reich as an undoing of the work of many generations, and as a reflection on the glory of the pre-war period. That these ideas were entertained at all weakened the integral position of Bavaria as a State. Besides, the hold of the National Socialists, whose policy emphasized the principle of unification, had created a deep cleavage in Bavaria itself, so that when the crucial moment came not a blow was struck for Bavarian independence.

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The Constitution of Weimar had prepared the way; the policy of the Allies since Versailles had provoked an irresistible wave of Nationalism, directed towards a common oppressor; and the severe economic depression had created elementary interests common to all Germans. In the face of a life-and-death struggle for national rehabilitation and economic recovery, Bavarian particularism lost much of its meaning for the individual Bavarian. Not without grumbling, but without strong resentment, the Southern Germans resigned themselves to their new position and found consolation in the fact that the centralization was carried out chiefly by men from the South, who filled the principal posts in the new Government.

As the most substantial result of the National Socialist revolution, the act which is to provide the foundation of Germany's future constitution is sufficiently important to be summarized here.

The Reich is made the only representative political unit of Germany. In all German States except Prussia, the Reich President, on the advice of the Chancellor, appoints Governors (*Reichs-Statthalter*) whose duty it is to see that the lines laid down by the Chancellor for the policy of the Reich are observed in the States. Only eleven Governors are appointed,

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so that seventeen States disappear as separate units. The Statthalter has the right to appoint and dismiss the Prime Minister of the State Government and, on the latter's advice, the other members of the State Cabinet. He has the right to dissolve the diet and order an election; the right of signing and publishing State laws; and of appointing and dismissing all judges and higher State officials on the advice of the State Government. He also has the right to reprieve. He may take the chair in the place of the Prime Minister at the meetings of the State Cabinet. The Diets are not allowed to move a vote of non-confidence against either the chief or the members of a State Cabinet. That right is exercised only by the Governor after consultation with the central government. The Governor himself is appointed for four years, the period of one diet, but he may at any time be recalled by the Reich President.

For Prussia the Reich Chancellor is appointed Governor. Members of the Reich Government may become members of the Prussian Government. Thus the dualism of the two administrations centred in Berlin, which in the past often led to friction and conflict, is solved by the virtual absorption of the Prussian Government by the central authority.

All articles of the Reich and State Constitutions

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which conflict with the new centralization have been declared invalid. For example, the institution of a State President, which existed in some of the States, was cancelled.

This far-reaching reform goes beyond anything that even the champions of the unitary State had ever advocated. They had desired a centralized Imperial government under which the provinces would enjoy a wide measure of autonomy. Hitler's reform, however, deprives the constituent German States of every right to pursue a policy independent of the central government. As President Hindenburg said when he administered the oath to the first ten Governors: "The institution of the Reichs-Statthalter is meant to provide a strong bond between the Reich and the *Länder* in order to facilitate a uniform policy, and thus consolidate the unity of the Reich." While the Governor is a supreme autocrat in his own State, he is only a subordinate official in relation to the Reich government. The latter has thus complete authority over the whole of Germany.

The Nazi Government did not give effect to this reform without first testing public opinion. The actual reform was begun tentatively by the appointment of Reich Commissaries to one State after

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the other. The authority for such action existed under the Weimar Constitution, which provided that in cases of grave emergency the Reich could override the Government of a State and take over its administration by nominating a special Commissary. Von Papen in this, as in other matters, showed the way to Hitler. By dismissing the socialist government of Prussia and appointing himself special Commissary, Papen demonstrated that the opposition of State governments could be overcome by stern and resolute action. The second step in the procedure was the dissolution of the diets and the promulgation of a decree by which it was ordained that the local diets should be reconstituted, without elections, on the basis of the new Reichstag. As the Communists were excluded from the diets, as they had been from the Reichstag, the National Socialists obtained full control of the legislative organs of the State.

The reform which has thus united Germany into a single State was carried out under the threat of force and during a universal wave of popular enthusiasm. Whether it will continue to stand after force has exhausted its effect and emotions have settled down is a question which is not easily answered. The act of political co-ordination is moreover only a temporary arrangement whose life

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is limited to four years. The material framework of constitutional organization remains to be constructed. It will be devised in the light of the four years' experience, and will be largely governed by the tendencies that manifest themselves during the period of transition. It is, however, well to remember that provisional political arrangements have a habit of becoming permanent. Indeed, the Weimar Constitution itself, according to article 178, was nothing more than an emergency statute, entirely provisional in form and in substance.

Three facts stand out clearly and emerge logically from the actions so far taken by the Hitler Government. The period of unity through dynasties has definitely come to an end. With it has also ended the Liberalism which found in party organizations and parliamentary government the ideal of democratic liberty. A third, and equally important, result which is evident even to the casual observer, is the re-establishment of the State as the Categorical Imperative of political philosophy.

Whether a new constitution is promulgated after four years or not, it is quite obvious that there will be no going back on the unity of Germany. That is an ideal for the realization of which the German nation had waited so long that once achieved, by

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whatever means, it is not likely ever to be given up. Nor is it probable that the centralization of political machinery which has now been effectively secured will be surrendered in any degree. No doubt there will be devolution of powers; there may be a wider autonomy for the units; but any revision of the system of inherent power in the State legislatures is inconceivable. Whatever autonomy the State legislatures and governments may enjoy in future will be *derived* from the Central Government as a matter of administrative convenience and not as a matter of right. That is to say that the Federation of Germany is dead, and nothing will revive it.

All Federal Governments are but halfway houses. They are no more than resting places in the path to unity. It is the desire for the unity of the nation, and the difficulty which such an ideal has to face at a certain time, that has led to the political device of Federation. As President Wilson in his classical analysis of the American Constitution has said, the United States began as a plural noun, and congressional government has reduced it to a singular one. In Germany it was only the dynastic particularism of the States that stood in the way of unity. With the elimination of the different ruling houses the necessity for Federation also ceased. Thus the uni-

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fication which Hitler carried out was a natural outcome of historical developments. But history neither begins nor ends with Hitler. Whatever his own intentions and those of his party may be in regard to future constitutional developments, it cannot be overlooked that the conditions created by his action are little short of ideal for a restoration of the monarchy in Germany. He has stated that monarchy was a subject not to be discussed; he has since denied every suggestion of a restoration with angry emphasis. Obviously his own position, and the dictatorial power of his party, would be seriously affected if there were to be a sovereign at the head of the State. But no intelligent observer of German affairs can fail to be impressed by the almost visible gap at the highest point of the new German State.

Events seem to press towards a monarchical solution. By abolishing Federation and creating an all-German State, Hitler has indeed paved the way for a German monarchy far more powerful than it has ever been in history. Whereas even the Hohenzollerns, German Emperors since 1871, were only the chosen heads of a League of Princes, a future sovereign would be a real Emperor of Germany, and his power would not be limited by the claims of rival dynasties. At the same time, that Emperor of

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the future would no longer be able to rule with the Princes and the aristocracy against the people. German unity rests to-day in the people itself, and its crowned exponent would have to rely on the people as the source of his power. But these are conjectures which may easily be falsified by history.

Apart from the unity of the State, what form the constitution will take it is not easy to forecast. The experience of party government during the last fourteen years has not prejudiced the German people in favour of parliamentary machinery as understood in the Western countries. A revival of parliamentarism seems to be out of the question. The tradition of German political life has long been that of an authoritarian State. But whether the new machinery of Government will take the form of a Presidential Cabinet similar to that of the United States, or whether the President's position will be gradually reduced to that of a symbolic figurehead, while the Government, as in Italy, rests on the power of its own party, only the future can show. At present, the tendency is undoubtedly in the latter direction. By the Enabling Act, the Reich Government possesses unlimited powers in legislation; even the President's counter-signature is not required to carry into effect laws promulgated by the Cabinet.

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Although under the constitution the President both governs and reigns, the provisional arrangements have reduced his power very considerably. That was inevitable, in order to enable Hitler to carry out the whole measure of his policy, as also perhaps to keep the President out of political controversy. It is just possible that this may turn out to be merely a transitional arrangement, and that the powers of the President will be re-established once the Nazi régime has been consolidated. Much depends, of course, on the period of life still remaining to the aged President Hindenburg, and on the character of his successor.

Any analysis of constitutional tendencies in a Government which centres so much around an individual, and one whose ideas are still nebulous and inchoate, must necessarily be incomplete and conjectural. So far the attempt of the National Socialists has been to tear away from the body of Germany the Nessus shirt of Liberalism, and to cleanse its constitution of the element of party government. The federalism of Weimar, which had neither the justification of the Bismarckian constitution nor the strength of the Prussian monarchy, had become a futile anachronism. What is to develop in its place, time and the political experience of the next few years alone will decide.

IX

THE TRAGEDY OF THE JEWS

Anti-Semitism in Germany has a long and bitter history. For centuries the German Jews lived in alternating periods of prosperity and oppression. Whenever they were given the slightest opportunity to build up their fortunes, they soon became influential and indispensable members of the German community. But hardly did they have time to breathe the unaccustomed air of liberty than an outburst of hostility threw them back into their former state of bondage. There are many German Jews living to-day who well remember the last of these waves of repression which occurred about fifty years ago. Their fathers, although living in a state of comparative freedom and prosperity, had experienced sufficient violent hostility to make them extremely wary whenever they moved about in public.

The emancipation of German Jews occurred only a hundred years ago. It was only during the nine-

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teenth century that they were recognized as German citizens, allowed to own houses, and to enjoy—"in principle"—equal rights. In practice, a German Jew found it very difficult even eighty years ago to acquire land, to obtain a position in the civil service, or to enter a university. On the whole the Jews resigned themselves to these practical restrictions which compared favourably with the oppression of previous times. When, after the revolution of 1848, Liberalism was speedily gaining ground in popular feeling, though not in politics, the situation of the Jews became increasingly satisfactory. In the 'seventies they were already respected citizens to whom most trades and professions were open. They studied in German universities, entered the civil service, the legal and medical professions. In trade and finance they rose to great influence. Gradually their sense of inferiority was wearing off, and at the same rate the remnants of the ancient ostracism disappeared. The daughters of prominent Jews married the sons of the German aristocracy. Thousands of educated Jews, believing that complete assimilation in the German nation was a natural ending for two thousand years of racial separatism, gave up their religion, became Christians, and married outside their race.

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The rise of the Jews from servitude to prominence had been phenomenal. The grandchildren of men who were virtually untouchable occupied high positions in the State, the professions, and society. When after the war of 1870-71 an economic slump occurred, while at the same time Nationalism was rising to unheard-of intensity, a reaction became inevitable. The pendulum of Jewish fate was swinging backwards. At the university of Berlin, the distinguished historian Heinrich von Treitschke was using his enormous influence on the minds of the students to strengthen their faith in the newly-born German nation. Bismarck's Empire had just been created out of the particularism of petty states and principalities. A strong current drew the academic youth, which for a century had been the vanguard of German Nationalism, towards the teaching of German greatness and strength which the powerful voice of Treitschke boomed out day after day to overcrowded audiences. It was Treitschke who first discovered that the Jews prevented the realization of that self-sufficient, disciplined, nationalist, and militarist Germany which was his vision. Their philosophic scepticism, bred in two thousand years of persecution, refused to believe blindly in the divine authority of the State. Their commercial training

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made them see beyond the frontiers without hatred or conceit. Their minds were used to investigating and analysing before they believed; long experience had taught them to rely on reason rather than on emotion. But it was emotion more than anything else which the extreme Nationalists of that time were using to weld together the diversity of tribes, traditions and loyalties into one solid whole.

It was mainly this contrast which led Treitschke to denounce the Jewish influence in his powerful speeches and writings which culminated in the angry phrase "The Jews are our misfortune". His cry was taken up by men who were at the same time less scrupulous and less erudite than the eminent historian. Adolf Stöcker, a prominent protestant clergyman, began to preach the gospel of anti-Semitism from the pulpit, and his influence on the middle-class population of Berlin was enormous. A group of ambitious politicians soon joined the movement, and by 1879 it had reached such proportions that Jews were openly attacked in the newspapers and molested in the streets. At the university of Berlin the students drew up a petition asking that Jews should be prevented from entering the public service and the legal profession. The cue was taken up all over the country in an outburst of

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hostility which found expression in many ugly incidents, while Treitschke pronounced that "this deep and strong movement was the natural reaction of Germanic feeling against a foreign element".

After a few years of persecution the situation became almost normal again. By the turn of the century the German Jews had once more regained their position of full citizenship. The influence of Kaiser Wilhelm II did much to restore Jewish liberty. Just as King Edward drew prominent English Jews into the inner circle of his friends, so Kaiser Wilhelm kept up a close friendship with a number of German Jews. The community advanced more and more towards absolute equality in civil status. They became eminent barristers and judges; they rose to high positions in the civil service. There were still many social obstacles which a Jew had to overcome before he could obtain a distinguished public position, but they were hardly stronger than those confronting, for example, the English Jews even to-day. It is true that only Jews of exceptional ability and patience could reach the higher regions of public service, but this state of affairs was tacitly accepted without ill feeling. When the Great War broke out the German Jews had every reason to feel that Germany was their "fatherland". They joined

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the army, many of them voluntarily before the age of conscription; they fought at the front, became officers, and were maimed and killed side by side with other Germans. Twelve thousand Jews lost their lives for Germany during the war. It is a gruesome subject for cold statistics, but for the sake of justice it should be said that the percentage of German Jews killed in the war was higher than that of the Germans as a whole.

Jewish services to Germany during the war were not limited to actual fighting. It is hard to imagine that Germany could have held out as long as she did against the overwhelming array of enemies if her supplies of foodstuffs and raw materials had not been organized with almost superhuman efficiency. That organization was mainly the work of Walter Rathenau, the Jewish president of the German General Electric Company. To name only one of the many Jews who gave indispensable service to the German cause during the war, it may be mentioned that Professor Fritz Haber, the inventor of a process for obtaining nitrogen from the air, was chiefly responsible for the scientific work which enabled the German armies to be supplied with poison gas.

The anti-Jewish movement, however, did not die

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out when it lost political influence during the 'eighties of the last century. It went underground. Ever since the breakdown of the Holy Roman Empire, there had been a powerful popular movement in Germany for the formation of a strong State uniting, as far as possible, all peoples of German language. As the repeated attempts to form such a Nation-State out of the muddle of particularist principalities failed, the Germans, always inclined to value the metaphysical, turned for assurance and strength to more intangible elements. The first two decades of the nineteenth century saw a great revival of German folk-lore. The songs and tales of the peasants were raised to the dignity of literature. The legends of Germanic ancestry were unearthed by patient research and popularized as evidence of German greatness. At last Nationalism turned to the uncertain conception of *race* as a substitute for the non-existent Empire. Richard Wagner was the most prominent exponent of this tendency. His son-in-law, the Englishman Houston Stewart Chamberlain, provided the theoretical foundation. It often happens that a foreigner can explain some vague emotional movement much better than the members of the movement themselves. The Englishman, being free of the urge of

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feeling which had driven his German friends to grope in the dark for something to which they could fasten their faith in the future of their country, could analyse and elaborate their nebulous vision with the greatest ease. In his book, *The Foundations of the Nineteenth Century*, he produced evidence that the Germans, being of "Nordic" race, were highly superior compared with their Slav and Latin neighbours—and, of course, infinitely superior to the Jews within their midst.

Chamberlain, who was no fool, denounced in a few easy pages the belief that Greeks, Romans and Frenchmen had made any valuable contribution to human culture. The Jews were worse than all, because they had no culture of their own and, while feeding on the achievements of other races, they acted as a virulent germ of decomposition. Christianity, while much inferior to the religions of the ancient "Nordic" peoples, was admitted to be valuable; but only after an elaborate proof had been offered that Jesus was not a Jew. In any case, the future was all with the "Nordic" race, of which the Germans were destined to be the leaders. In the meantime, science had conveniently discovered that the influence of North European *languages* reached as far East as Asia Minor and India. There was some

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evidence that the Germanic languages had not come from the East as had been widely believed, but on the contrary had emigrated from Europe towards Asia. When it was found, for instance, that the word "beech" appears in Sanskrit, although there are no beech trees east of Europe, it was thought to be obvious that the migration had been eastward. The term "Indo-Germanic" was coined for a group of inter-related languages, and for a similar group another school of professors created the term "Aryan", taken from a certain Indian race which is believed to have come from Europe. These half-baked theories, referring to languages only, were in the popular mind confused with the conception of race consciousness. Soon it was taken for an established fact that there was in existence an "Aryan" race of which the "Nordic" part was both ancestor and highest exponent, and which was incompatibly opposed to the Semitic race.

The seed of race consciousness produced a rich crop of theories which had in common only a violent hostility towards the Jews. It is in accordance with a psychological law that the race ideal was strongest in those frontier districts where the Germans really had nothing but their race to bind them to the "Fatherland". Not by accident have

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most of the fiercest leaders of German anti-Semitism come from parts of the disintegrated Austrian Empire, or from the small Baltic States. But while these ideas had for a long time only local significance, they played a considerable part in building up the feeling of political strength which pervaded the German Empire in the years before the Great War. Anti-Semitism was preparing its new weapon of race worship.

The German Jews had earned the reward of full equality by their equal sacrifice during the war. The Constitution of Weimar gave them this equality in a measure which they had never known before. Indeed the Constitution itself was, in its chief parts, drawn up by a Jewish professor of public law. In accordance with the principle of absolute neutrality of the State towards the political and the religious views of its citizens, it was stipulated that the question of religion or race should never even be asked when contracts were concluded, or appointments made. The German Jews took full advantage of their freedom. By ability and application they rapidly rose to prominence in almost every field of national activity.

One of the finest men among them, Walter Rathenau, even became a Cabinet Minister. A

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great German patriot, he was equally conscious of his Jewish origin and tradition. He was perhaps the first statesman to raise Germany out of the iron ring of hatred and contempt which surrounded her after the war. But he saw that only reconciliation and patience could restore the Germans to a position of moral equality with other European powers. It was as much for this ideal, as for his Jewish descent, that he was murdered by fanatical Nationalists. His assassination was the first flash of the gathering storm. It was realized as such by far-seeing Democrats on the very day of the crime. When the Catholic Chancellor Dr. Wirth, who had been an intimate friend of the murdered statesman, told the Reichstag in a prophetic speech that "the enemy stands on the right", he was announcing the beginning of the end of the German experiment in liberty.

For the last decade those with eyes to see could observe that a reaction against freedom in general, and against Jewish freedom in particular, was in rapid progress. Nationalism was sweeping the country. The Jews, having been treated as outcasts for centuries, and as guests at the best of times, had never been able to strike roots deep enough for a complete identification with the emotions of the people among which they lived. Narrow National-

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ism was foreign to their feelings. Their ideas were essentially humanitarian, even when they gave their lives for the cause of a country. At all periods of national concentration, from the times of the Roman Empire to recent German Nationalism, it has been strongly felt that there was within the Jewish people a substance which resisted the process of smelting all national elements in a great cauldron. They might share the political and intellectual ideals of their hosts; they might give the most valuable co-operation and even leadership, but they always kept in reserve a tradition of their own which prevented them from going to the extremes of joy or sorrow with their non-Jewish countrymen. Nationalism therefore regarded the Jews, and especially those Jews in positions of political or intellectual influence, as an obstacle to that complete unity of thought and aim which it wished to create for Germany. It was recalled that the Jews had been shown by historians to have been an important element of decomposition in the Roman Empire; yet that it was just this decomposing effect of Jewish mentality which had been largely responsible for the breakdown of the strong differences between the German "tribes", thus preparing the constitutional development of a unified German Empire. It was indeed the most

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famous historian of the Roman Imperium, Theodor Mommsen, who wrote in 1880, during one of the periodic waves of anti-Semitism, that "he believed that Providence knew very well why it added to the Germanic metal a few per cent of Israel". But Nationalism is not based on reason.

During the breakdown of all established order after the war, the German Jews made full use of their inherited ability for adaptation to new situations. Many of them survived the disasters of revolution and inflation much better, or recovered more quickly, than most non-Jewish Germans. No one can blame them for the fact that they used their opportunities as best they could. Trade and industry had remained their chief domain, and many of them prospered. Several branches of economic activity, such as banking and the departmental stores, were increasingly concentrated in Jewish hands. They applied themselves with equal energy to the intellectual professions. Medicine had long been one of their talents, and they showed such ability for it that they soon rose to the highest positions. In 1932 there were among the fifty thousand members of the medical profession no less than seven thousand Jewish doctors. A similar proportion prevailed in the legal profession. Thus out of

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three thousand five hundred barristers admitted to the Berlin Courts, no less than two thousand were Jews. In the universities the Jews were equally prominent both as students and teachers. Two of the largest German Press concerns were owned by the Jewish families of Ullstein and Mosse. Jewish journalists were very numerous, especially in Berlin; some of them held highly influential positions in the Press, and most of them were connected with the Liberal, Socialist or Communist parties. Amongst Communists, Jews were few; but Socialism, and especially Liberalism, attracted the vast majority of the German Jews. That is not surprising in view of the fact that Liberalism had given them their charter of liberty, but it is equally true that the sober, rational Jewish mind is most at home with political ideas which strive to exclude emotional hatred and fanaticism, while concentrating on a political system founded on common sense and majority rule. Thus the German Jews crowded more and more into the sinking boat of a system against which the powerful forces of Nationalism were ranged.

As unemployment and economic misery increased, it could not pass unnoticed that the Jewish share in a number of lucrative trades and professions was out of all proportion to their percentage among the

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German population as a whole. While the 560,000 Jews formed hardly one per cent of the people, they had come to occupy anything from a third to three-fourths of the available posts in certain professional units. For example, it was pointed out with growing dissatisfaction that in certain hospitals as many as seventy per cent of the medical staff were Jews. Such evidence of Jewish prominence could be easily multiplied. That is not to say that Jewish doctors, lawyers, university teachers and journalists had risen by any other reason than sheer ability. The Jews have added enormously to the reputation of German science, literature, music and medicine. Wherever they gained entrance some of their number excelled in distinguished achievements. It is equally true that the bulk of their community consisted of hard-working, law-abiding, gifted people, whose contribution to German national life was highly valuable. But they were destined to be made the scapegoats of Nationalism for the very reason that they had rapidly risen from obscurity to prominence.

It cannot be overlooked that a small number of Jews had exploited their newly won liberty in a manner which was bound to provoke popular resentment. Jewish financiers were involved in many of the gigantic corruption scandals which stained

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the shield of the Weimar Republic. The speculations of Jewish financiers were responsible for several industrial disasters and bank crashes which robbed thousands of their savings. Some Jewish industrialists earned fortunes while the mass of the people was sinking into conditions very near starvation. A few Jewish journalists and politicians were prominent in that peculiar German brand of pacifism which consists mainly in fighting re-armament by supporting the oppressive policies of foreign powers. There were Jewish authors and playwrights who developed a cynical attitude, which had an increasingly provocative effect on a suffering population fighting for bare existence. It would be quite untrue to say that only Jews succumbed to these temptations. There were as many, and probably more, gentile Germans whose sins were at least equally great. But the Jews were there to be pointed at, and their mere participation in any unlawful or despicable activity was sufficient to make the entire community, in the eyes of desperate fanatics, the symbol of a degradation from which the German people were striving to free themselves. Add to this that their success had in many cases gone to their heads, and that a small number of them lived in showy luxury at a time of extreme poverty,

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and it will be seen that sufficient powder had collected for a single spark to cause the whole system to explode.

Circumstances were favourable to any political movement which would stoop to an exploitation of the unifying effect of hatred. The National Socialist movement, desperately searching for weapons in its fight for power, discovered very early in its career that anti-Semitism was an easy and unfailing attraction to mass-meetings. Adolf Hitler, born in one of those frontier areas where the German population was for ever fighting against deliberate Slav penetration, had grown up in an atmosphere of racial exclusiveness in which it was generally understood that the Jews were always to blame. In Austria the strong anti-Jewish feeling had not prevented both races living together in fairly cordial relationship. Anti-Semitism had always been taken with a grain of salt by both sides and, apart from periodic outbursts of popular hysteria, the relations between Germans and Jews in Austria were decidedly better than those, for instance, between Russians and Jews. Hitler's mind, however, was of the kind that runs along only one track at a time, and that with express speed. Having once decided on a point, he drove it home with uncompromising consistency. If the

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Jews were to blame for something, they were to blame for everything. If some Jews were bad, all Jews were bad. If they deserved to be subdued, they deserved to be destroyed. Hitler went all out for the complete annihilation of the Jews. His extremism at first embarrassed the other members of his party. When Hitler spoke for the first time before an audience of some hundred persons in October 1919, the chairman of the young party, Herr Harrer, stood up at the end of the meeting and tried to explain away what the first speaker had said, declaring that the party did not stand for "noisy anti-Semitism". But Hitler did not give in, and when he became the unquestioned chief of the movement, he put anti-Semitism in the foreground of his agitation. He had by then hit upon the theory of the superiority of the "Nordic" race, and taken it up with all the boundless enthusiasm of which he was capable. He was greatly strengthened in that conviction by Alfred Rosenberg, one of his first collaborators. Rosenberg was a Balt, a member of that outpost of the German race which, closely surrounded by Slav peoples, fought desperately to retain its German traditions within the Russian Empire to which its territory belonged. Rosenberg's reactions to that paradoxical situation were similar

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to those which Hitler had developed in similar circumstances. But while Hitler's hostility towards the Jews was at first mainly instinctive and emotional, Rosenberg had studied the works of the race theorists, and had himself worked out an elaborate doctrine of "Nordic" superiority which culminated in the demand that the "Germanic peoples" should free themselves altogether from the contaminating influence of the Semitic race.

Other mystics of anti-Semitism, for the most part people who had either come from frontier districts or were of doubtful racial origin, joined up with the little Munich group. The race theory soon became the chief instrument of anti-Semitism. The term Jews was extended to all who were not altogether of "German blood"; the possibility of assimilation was completely denied. All Germans who had even one Jewish grand-parent were considered to be foreigners racially. In future, no further racial admixture was to be tolerated. Mixed marriages were to be made a capital crime. In this fanatical form the race theory, which had been quietly developing ever since the days of Richard Wagner and Houston Stewart Chamberlain, was now forced to the very front of political controversy. It found expression in the famous National Socialist programme of 1920,

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which contained the sweeping demand that all Jews should be deprived of German citizenship, expelled from appointments in the civil service and the professions, and treated as aliens. This extreme programme was at first rather a handicap than an asset to the National Socialist movement. The *Völkische Beobachter*, even then the chief organ of the young party, did not think it wise to publish the programme at all.

Later on, the state of popular emotion became increasingly favourable to anti-Semitism for the complex reasons which have been mentioned in an earlier part of this chapter. But even when Adolf Hitler took office in January, 1933, few people seriously believed that the anti-Jewish programme was more than an expression of feeling and a weapon of political propaganda. Certainly the Prussian Conservatives of President Hindenburg's circle did not for one moment expect that hostility towards the Jews would go to the point of official persecution. There must have been millions of National Socialist voters who thought on the same lines, and strongly disapproved of the actions of a violent minority of the party. But once the spark had flown, the fire caught the dried timber with terrific speed and soon the flames were leaping

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so high that all efforts at salvage were in vain.

The first Jews to suffer from the popular fury were those connected with the left wing parties. Jewish Communists shared the terrible fate of their gentile comrades under the new régime. Jewish Socialists were not singled out for special persecution; the suppression of "Marxism" by violence did not discriminate between Jews and non-Jews. Liberal and pacifist politicians and journalists suffered at the hands of their new masters with complete equality of race. Very soon after the March elections the situation changed. The Nazis began to apply the fanatical provisions of their half-forgotten programme with extreme force. Jews were now singled out for official suppression, not because of any personal activities but by reason of their race. The Jewish community as a whole was placed in the position of "aliens", which the Nazis had from the beginning promised them. Those who held positions in the civil service or the legal profession were the first on whom the blow fell. Bands of uniformed Nazis entered the Law Courts in every town and city and forced Jewish judges and barristers to leave the building, often without giving them time to collect their papers or remove their professional robes. A few days later these actions were

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legalized by the government. It was decreed that the proportion of Jews in the civil service, in the legal and medical appointments, and in the schools and universities was to be limited to the proportion of the Jewish community to the whole of the German population. One and a half per cent was officially pronounced to be the maximum of Jewish participation in all these institutions.

Every man, woman, and child who either held a post in State, provincial or municipal service, or visited an educational institution of any kind, was required to sign an affidavit stating the racial origin of himself, his parents and grand-parents. If one grand parent was a Jew, it was sufficient to make the descendant a Jew in the new legal sense. No more than one and a half per cent of Jews, in that sense, were allowed in any single unit of national life, although the number of Germans who come under this extended conception of "Jewish origin" is estimated at three millions, or five per cent of the whole population. An exception was made for such Jews as had served in the war, or whose fathers or sons were killed during the war. In practice, this provision was not often carried out. Whenever the moderating influence of the Conservative members of the Government obtained an alleviation of the

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anti-Jewish campaign, the "activists" of the Nazi party stepped in and removed those whom the Government was prepared to spare. In the course of a few months many thousands of Jewish civil servants, officials, lawyers, judges, doctors, teachers and employees lost their positions. In most cases National Socialists took their places, and there were many who took advantage of this opportunity by quickly joining the ruling party.

Countless tragedies accompanied these developments. Many Jews had been serving the national cause in the sphere of their profession with complete unselfishness all their lives. They had felt as Germans first, and as Jews afterwards. Others, who had been born and bred as gentiles, were suddenly told that they belonged to an alien community because of some long-forgotten ancestor. The aristocracy, in particular, included large numbers of families who had an admixture of Jewish blood. Their members, often distinguished officers, diplomats, or civil servants with brilliant war records and unquestioned patriotism, were thrown out without mercy. For example, when it was discovered that Colonel Düsterberg, the second-in-command of Stahlhelm, had "Jewish blood in his veins", he was immediately deprived of his post and retired into

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obscurity. His Excellency Dr. Theodor Lewald, for many years permanent Secretary of State in the Home Office, and the father of the recent renaissance of German sport, was also found to be of Jewish origin and forced to retire from his position of President of the official German Sports Committee. The old man of seventy-three years who had been a highly popular figure in all patriotic sports associations and was the appointed chairman of the Olympic Games of 1936, was now sharing the fate of a race which he had long ceased to regard as his own. Far worse were the tragedies which befell Jewish or half Jewish children who were subjected to terrible indignities at school, expelled in front of the class, or requested to sit on a separate bench so that the other children might not be "infected". These are only a few examples of the effect of the anti-Jewish measures on individuals. It is impossible to imagine their collective effect on a whole community which from a position of respectable prosperity was suddenly thrown into the miserable status of untouchables. The majority of them were not only deprived of employment but of all chances of acquiring a new means of livelihood.

The culminating point of the campaign for the annihilation of the Jews was the boycott which the

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Nazis organized against all Jewish shops on April 1st. On the authority of the Government, the National Socialist Party requested all Germans to refrain from entering Jewish shops; the request was strengthened by armed pickets being placed in front of these stores. Windows and walls of Jewish undertakings were marked with inscriptions such as "This is a Jewish shop—Germans buy from Germans!" or at least with the single word "JEW" in enormous letters. If anyone was brave enough to enter such a shop in spite of the pickets, he was first warned, then photographed, and his name and address taken for publication in the local Nazi paper. At first it was intended to continue the boycott until the Jewish shops were ruined. As a pretext the Nazis had alleged that Jews had been spreading defamatory reports about Germany abroad, and that these reports were responsible for the unfavourable attitude of other countries towards the new German régime. The boycott against German goods, which had been started by Jewish traders in other countries as a protest against the persecution of German Jews, had provided the Nazis with an easy excuse for retaliation. But when the Jewish proprietors of many large stores threatened to shut down their premises and dismiss all employees, the plans were

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changed and the boycott limited to one day. It is a remarkable fact, which is confirmed by information from all parts of Germany, that during the days before and after the boycott the Jewish traders received innumerable calls from German customers, including sympathizers of the new régime, who apologized for the boycott and asserted their profound disapproval. Indeed, business before and after the day of boycott, reached record figures in many Jewish shops. They could not, however, hold up the ruthless march of a minority which held all the power in its hands and was determined to use it to the utmost limit.

The National Socialist idea of the treatment of the Jewish problem is rather like that of King Pharaoh. It is true that the official programme had recently been softened, so that a certain number of Jews at least were allowed to earn their living. In practice the Government found great difficulty in enforcing these alleviations. The fury of a fanatical movement had been whipped up to such an extent that it proved impossible to call a halt at a certain point. It is by now notorious how German Jews of great distinction and world-wide fame were treated with the same hostility that confronted the nameless masses of the community. For example, Bruno Walter, the

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famous conductor, was prevented from giving concerts; Otto Klemperer, the famous conductor of the Berlin State Opera, was asked to retire. In the same way prominent Jewish scientists, doctors, and authors whose work had been an integral part of German culture were treated like obscure emigrants from the East. The case of Professor Einstein is perhaps the one that created the greatest surprise and indignation in other countries—although the outcry against him was partly caused by the fact that he had identified himself with pacifist, international and even vaguely Communist ideals. However, it serves no useful purpose to prolong the list of individual cases. It is sufficient to say that the stigma of the outcast has been officially branded on every German Jew without discrimination. A few succeeded in obtaining positions in other countries; several hundreds emigrated to Palestine. The vast majority of German Jews, however, are at this moment facing starvation and destitution; they are awaiting with fading hopes the return of reason, or another Moses who may stand up and lead them into a better land.

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German foreign policy since the war has on the whole followed a straight road. The Treaty of Versailles laid down a law which Germany detested but was forced to obey. She could attack or evade certain articles of that law; she could struggle for a gradual revision of its clauses, but the Treaty, strengthened by military force, set definite limits to her foreign policy. The aim was clear: Germany was to be raised out of the humiliation of defeat to the status of a free nation and a great power equal in status to other European nations. The downfall had been sudden. When the war started, Germany felt herself to be the greatest power on the continent of Europe. Almost throughout the war, she had reason to believe that if she did not win, at least she would not lose. Then came swift defeat and a cruel aftermath. It was no more than natural that the Germans were unwilling to accept their position as final.

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The hatred of Germany which the war had brought forth took a long time to abate. In the hour of victory it was intensified into a spirit of vengeance. In her fight for rehabilitation, Germany had to break through a Chinese wall of moral defamation in addition to the political obstructions ranged against her. There were many who dreamed the bitter dream of the defeated: proud isolation, and patience until the day of revenge. That road was barred by the overwhelming military strength of France and the iron ring of Allies which she had laid all around the German frontiers. It was barred by the determination of the Allies to destroy the economic power of Germany for all time. It was barred by the sufferings of a large section of the nation under foreign occupation. There was only one alternative: to save what was left of Germany from complete destruction by trying to fulfil, as far as possible, the demands of the peace treaties, while gradually breaking down the hatred and distrust by a steady struggle for reconciliation. After a few years of confusion on both sides, the situation settled down very much on these lines. Common sense emerged once more, and the victorious powers became accustomed to the idea that Germany had not disappeared for ever from the ranks of the great nations.

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German policy was limited to defence. As long as her domestic affairs were in a state of turmoil, and as long as foreign troops were standing on her soil, she could do nothing but struggle for an alleviation of the treatment meted out to her by the former Allies. As soon as the Rhineland was free and reparations reduced to manageable proportions, the first signs of independent activity in foreign policy began to appear. They were immediately greeted with a storm of indignation in other countries. When Germany intimated at Geneva that she would not wait for ever for the fulfilment of the promise to disarm given by the victorious powers at Versailles: that she would insist on eventual equality, even if it was to come through German re-armament instead of general disarmament—people began to talk of another war to destroy finally what was left of German "frightfulness". When after the death of the great statesman Stresemann his well-meaning but erratic successor Dr. Curtius announced that the German Government intended to negotiate for a customs union with Austria, an international crisis arose with deplorable effects on the political and economic situation of Europe.

Yet these actions were by no means sudden attacks on some sacred "European status", but

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formed comparatively unimportant parts of the inevitable line that Germany had taken in foreign policy ever since her defeat. As far as the "status quo" implied that Germany should, for example, finally renounce Alsace and Lorraine and pay for all damage caused by the war, she recognized it; in the Treaty of Locarno she gave up all ambitions to a change of her Western frontiers, and by paying an amount of reparations higher than the total of the actual war damage she gave practical proof of her acceptance in that field. As far as, however, the "status quo" created by the Treaty of Versailles forced Germany to give up territories which she regarded as belonging to her, and as far as it perpetuated German inferiority in a military as well as a political sense, she never accepted it. Her concrete attacks on that hated system varied in direction and method according to the possibilities provided by changing situations. It was obvious that she would become increasingly active as the limitations imposed by foreign occupation and financial supervision disappeared. The German people never gave up their determination to undo the effects of defeat. Indeed anyone who expected them to act otherwise was displaying a complete lack not only of historical knowledge but of realistic

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feeling. As chances improved, their minds became clear and that determination became more and more the unifying conviction of the entire nation. The demand for a revision of the Peace Treaty, which was directed far more towards moral than territorial or military aims, became an outcry.

The British attitude towards these developments has for years been limited to a moderating influence on France, and an attempt to mediate between France and Germany. There have been aberrations from this course, but on the whole, the British Government has steadfastly pursued a policy which aimed at easing the pressure on German nationalism and gaining time for a calming down of world passions. With luck, this policy might have succeeded, especially as it was generously supported by the Bank of England with financial assistance in the economic reconstruction of Germany. But luck failed. Ours are not the times of reason. Every attempt to satisfy the German inferiority complex fizzled out in some high-sounding but empty declaration. France remained unmoved on her golden throne and refused to trust to anything but arms.

This was the situation when Adolf Hitler was appointed German Chancellor. He was the leader of the most violent wing of the "revision front". He

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had announced in innumerable speeches and writings that he wanted to break the whole pernicious system of the Versailles Treaty by hook or by crook—if needs be by war. His own autobiography, now officially declared to be the most important German book, contained plans for a territorial expansion towards the East, for determined re-armament without further fuss, and for a thorough militarization of the German people. It was with profound misgivings that the world saw this man appointed to the highest office. Yet the reaction of world opinion was not altogether unfavourable.

Those who had any information about the erratic development of the National Socialist theory, knew that much of it was the result of ignorance and inexperience; the needs of political agitation had led to formulations never intended to guide actual policy. As early as the spring of 1932, Hitler had got in touch with influential circles in foreign countries and intimated that things would not be eaten as hot as they were cooked. Moreover, the Foreign Office remained in the hands of Baron von Neurath, who was well known to foreign Governments as a former German Ambassador to London and a man of great common sense. The fact that Herr von Papen, whose efforts for reconciliation with France

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were generally recognized, belonged to Hitler's Cabinet as Vice-Chancellor, did much to allay the universal uneasiness. Hitler had every reason to be well satisfied with the attitude of foreign opinion. It was soon discovered that he had no intention of putting his violent threats into practice. If anything, his foreign policy was to be milder than that of his predecessors, for he was free of their predicament of having to satisfy a clamorous Nationalist opposition. It was also regarded as a relief that it was at last possible to deal with a German Government which was not for ever threatened with overthrow by an unknown, disquieting mass-movement. During the month of February it looked as if Hitler's appointment had not weakened but strengthened the cause of European peace.

Everything changed when domestic terror began. The excesses of the Nazis' fight against the opposition, the brutality with which all civil liberties were suppressed, and especially the persecution of the Jews, created an intense hostility abroad. Once awakened to the inhuman effects of the German upheaval, the spirit of Liberalism stood up from its grave in a world-wide protest. From the detestation of intolerance to the uneasy suspicion that pre-war German Imperialism had returned,

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was only a short step. "Europe is menaced", said Sir Austen Chamberlain in the British House of Commons, "while Germany is afflicted by this narrow, exclusive aggressiveness. That is not the Germany to which we can afford to make concessions." The debate in which these bitter words were spoken by an embittered man was a demonstration against the new German régime unprecedented in peace time. The British Foreign Secretary, though more guarded in his words, expressly identified himself with that demonstration. A German diplomatic protest was not even held worthy of reply. The British Press, which had at least not been openly hostile during the first weeks of Hitler's Government, now joined the chorus with unrestricted passion. In other countries opinion had gradually strengthened against Hitler; the London debate opened the floodgates to a rushing stream of hostile protest. Although the German Press was restricted in its reports on foreign opinion, full summaries of that terrific demonstration were allowed to appear. It was soon clear to the most optimistic supporters of the new Government that it had suffered a resounding diplomatic defeat. Within a few weeks all the valuable capital of goodwill which successive German Governments, supported by a host of

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authors, journalists and private individuals, had built up in years of patient sacrifice, was entirely dissipated. The effects were immediately felt in current international negotiations. Germany felt herself surrounded by a ring of distrust and hostility such as she had not known since the days of Versailles. In France and Poland responsible politicians began to talk of a "preventive war"; in Great Britain even confirmed pacifists declared that it would be better to subdue Germany by force before it was too late. Even Mussolini, who had viewed the rise of National Socialism with paternal sympathy, and whose advice had been of enormous value to Hitler during his fight for executive power, joined in the protest against the ruthless excesses of the new régime. When Captain Goering and Herr von Papen visited the Italian Premier at Easter, they were rudely disillusioned about the supposed sympathy of the Fascist leader.

The new masters of Germany realized with a profound shock that their triumph at home was being offset by a smashing defeat abroad. Final proof was provided by the reception of Hitler's emissary, Alfred Rosenberg, in England. He was greeted by hostile demonstrations wherever he went. A wreath which he deposited on the Cenotaph in

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Hitler's name was taken away and thrown into the Thames, the offender being mildly fined for "having expressed his views in the wrong manner". Those politicians who did not refuse to receive Rosenberg were frankly unsympathetic or even rude to him. The Press openly regarded his visit as an insult. Rosenberg is no fool. He knew that the miscarriage of his venture would mean his political downfall, but he did not deceive himself about its significance. On his return, the eyes of the German rulers were finally opened. Their reaction was of an unexpected kind.

Hitler summoned the Reichstag and made an eminently conciliatory speech on the aims of his foreign policy. Speaking in a quiet voice, vastly different from his excited platform manner, he solemnly declared that Germany would pursue her aims within the framework of the Versailles Treaty as long as it could not be revised by negotiation and agreement. Germany would continue to co-operate loyally in the work of disarmament, though it demanded that other powers should speed up their own disarmament, so that virtual equality could be reached within a limited period. Germany recognized the *raison d'être* of the new nations, and renounced all ambitions of territorial aggrandisement.

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The use of force in Europe could only worsen the political and economic misery of the European peoples; a new war would lead to complete destruction of the order of society, and to a Communist chaos. Even where the territorial provisions of the Peace Treaty were regarded as thoroughly unjust by Germany, it was recognized that they could not be removed before a better settlement had been agreed upon.

About the same time, Hitler received the Polish minister and told him in the presence of the Foreign Secretary that Germany would keep her Eastern policy strictly within the limits set by the Treaty of Versailles. He saw the Soviet Ambassador and assured him that it was the earnest desire of his Government to retain and develop friendly relations with Russia; the fact that the ruthless suppression of Communism in Germany had eliminated the danger of revolution did not obstruct German-Russian co-operation, but facilitated it. The long delayed ratification of the expired Treaty of friendship between the two countries was now effected. At Geneva, the German delegate to the disarmament conference stated that his Government now accepted the British proposals, which it had bitterly opposed before, and withdrew its amendments.

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These events created a favourable impression abroad, and did something to repair the damage which earlier developments had done. Hitler had spoken more conciliatorily than any German statesman had dared to speak for many years. In fact, Dr. Brüning, who had often desired to make such a conciliatory statement, had shrunk from it for fear of the outcry which Hitler would have loosened against him in the country. It is true that there remained in many minds the suspicion that the German Government was merely trying to gain time until it was in a position to realize its territorial ambitions by force. On the whole, however, the world seemed to believe in Hitler's sincerity. And on the whole, the world was right. What the leaders of the National Socialist movement had said and written on foreign affairs was said and written in times of utter confusion. Once they were faced with the realities and responsibilities of foreign policy, their former utterances lost all meaning even in their own eyes. They saw the chance of a tremendous domestic experiment awaiting them; they were nearer to complete control than they had ever dreamed of being. The rebuilding of society was bound to take many years. War, or even a continuance of diplomatic conflict with foreign powers, was equally bound to obstruct their

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work, and eventually to overthrow them. Their imperialism, if it can be called by that name, is directed towards their own people. It is intensive, not expansive.

That is not to say that Hitler's Government has in any way given up the claim to a revision of the Peace Treaties, either in the field of disarmament, or in regard to the Eastern frontier, the return of the African colonies, and so on. But Hitler has realized that these claims can only be furthered by those methods of peaceful diplomacy which his predecessors had followed. It was perhaps as well that the most passionate exponent of a "strong" policy should have had a chance to try for himself the results of "banging the table". Ever since the days of Versailles, one party after another had loudly proclaimed that the Government in office was too weak, and that a little plain speaking would make a terrific impression on the enemy. And one party after another was disillusioned after a brief political experiment. It may be hoped that the circle is now complete.

Certainly the world has left Hitler no room for misunderstanding the impression which proud intransigence can make on a delicate situation. The first phase of the new German régime was accompanied by a continuous series of defeats in

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foreign affairs. "After three months of the new régime," wrote the London *Times* in June, "foreign opinion was probably more unfavourable to Germany than at any time in her history, excluding the war years." For a time the Nazis were convinced that this was but a passing phase; Italian Fascism, they said, had experienced similar hostility and had emerged from it without damage. As time went on, however, they began to realize that Germany's case was entirely different from that of Italy. A strong Italy may be a nuisance to France, but it is welcome to Great Britain. A strong Germany, and particularly one which is boiling over with emotional Nationalism, is regarded as a real danger, not only by France but by nearly all the powers of Europe. Moreover, Germany is dependent on the goodwill of foreign powers far more than Italy ever was. This fact is indeed deeply felt even by the mass of the German people, who follow every movement of foreign opinion with intense attention. The open hostility of world opinion was perceptibly cooling popular enthusiasm for Hitler's régime. Peace and goodwill abroad had to be re-established at all costs. Such is the background to that sensational reversal of German policy which was initiated by Hitler's Reichstag speech in May.

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Re-armament has become a matter of prestige for Germany. Whatever the methods followed at Geneva, and whatever the pace chosen, it will be almost impossible for the German Government to avoid a certain measure of re-armament, unless drastic disarmament is miraculously agreed on by the other powers at the eleventh hour. The fact that the term disarmament has been completely superseded in the German political dictionary by the term "equality of rights" shows how much this question is a psychological one. It is useless to deny that in the world as it is, armies, navies and air forces have become the chief symbol of national pride. A country which has just rediscovered its patriotism in a great popular wave of enthusiasm can hardly be expected to be happy without those symbols. It is perhaps unfair to blame Germany for wishing to do what the victorious powers have been doing ever since the end of the war. It is, in any case, too late to anchor the peace of the world in a European status based on the weakness of defeated Germany. If the peace cannot be secured on the assumption that Germany will, in a comparatively near future, be once more strong and powerful, then peace cannot be secured. But it is needless to think that it is altogether too late. If anything, it is too early. Only

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when Germany has overcome that inferiority complex of which Hitler has spoken so frankly to a million workmen assembled in Berlin on the first "national May day" will the mass of her people be ripe for the realization of the wisdom that wars do not pay. Then will be the time to make a new peace.

The most pressing problem is that of the Polish "corridor", that strip of land given to Poland by the Versailles Treaty as a way to the sea, which cuts right across the German territory and isolates East Prussia, one of the richest of German provinces, from the motherland. The Germans will not cease to demand the return of that territory, especially as it includes the purely German city of Danzig. Poland, however, is equally determined to keep it, for it not only allows her free access to the Baltic coast, on which she has just constructed the important harbour of Gdynia, but it gives East Prussia into her hands as a hostage in case of German aggression. Ethnological and historical arguments played next to no part in the decision of the Peace Conference to give this "corridor" to Poland. They could, therefore, hardly justify its retention even if it were true that the area was mainly populated by Poles. But that is in fact untrue. The Polish element in the "corridor" constitutes only a thirty per cent min-

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ority; the rest are Germans and Cassubes, a Slav people who have always voted, whenever they were asked, for inclusion with Germany. There is not the slightest doubt that if a free plebiscite had been held in the "corridor" before its fate was decided, the result would have been overwhelmingly in favour of Germany. A peaceful solution of this problem will have to be found in the interests of all concerned. There is reason to believe that Germany would eventually be satisfied with a return of the Northern part of the "corridor", including Danzig, with the exception of a small area around the new Polish port of Gdynia; she would be prepared not only to grant Poland the right of way to the sea, but even to renounce all claims to the restoration of those parts of Upper Silesia which were given to Poland in open disregard of the plebiscite ordered by the Peace Conference. Here again, it is the psychological factor which is the most important. Once the road to East Prussia is reopened, the tension will be eased, and peace secured. Without that concession, German relations with Poland will always remain a source of danger.

In the present state of feeling in Europe these speculations are hardly very topical. In spite of the Four Power Pact—which was initiated by Mussolini

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expressly for the purpose of facilitating an early settlement of the problem of Germany's eastern frontiers—resistance to a territorial revision of the Treaties is stronger than ever. Italy is making an effort to turn Germany's attentions toward the North-East in order to maintain its present influence in the Balkans; but the strengthening of the Little Entente, its close co-operation with Poland, and Russia's new system of pacts with the countries along her western border, all unite to bar any expansive tendency in German foreign policy. It remains true now—as it has been since the war—that Germany's road to the East leads through Paris. Whatever her desires for an *entente* with Great Britain; whatever her designs on Austria; whatever her relations with fascist Italy: it is only the reconciliation with France which can break Germany's chains. That fact, however, has to be realized in Paris as well as in Berlin.

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Adolf Hitler is a simple man who rose to prominence through an extraordinary gift for oratory, a keen mind capable of extreme simplification, and a natural shrewdness in dealing with men. A man of medium height and commonplace features, it would be hard to spot him in a Sunday-afternoon crowd of respectable German middle-class people. On close observation, his pale face is remarkable only for a certain lack of chin which is superficially compensated for by the small dark moustache, and a spark of fire in his dark eyes which in moments of excitement can give the whole man a "glowing" expression. There is behind that ordinary face of an earnest, respectable *bourgeois* a second face—that of a fanatic. The break is equally apparent in his character. In hours of rest and privacy, Hitler is simple, friendly, and full of common sense. He neither drinks nor smokes. He likes children and

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motor-cars. He prefers—as he once confessed to an audience of undergraduates—a smart, thunderous military march to any complicated work of music.

Yet at the slightest provocation a fierce temper boils up—and the man is changed out of all recognition. His face is burning, his voice assumes the angry shout of the public meeting, and his words carry bitter, biting sarcasm. Once his ambition is roused, he is entirely oblivious of human considerations. His mind begins to think on abstract, doctrinaire lines. He sees himself as the pivot of German history. Every muscle of his body, every fibre of his mind become rigid. The man who only a minute ago was a quiet, simple companion has become the ruthless dictator of a great people.

The leader of the first revolution the lower middle class has ever made is essentially a member of that unhappy class. Even the strange duality of his temperament is to a certain extent a reflection of the breakdown which his class has experienced during his lifetime. But there are particular reasons why that characteristic should have become so prominent and explosive in his nature. His life—described by himself in a heavy volume when he was hardly thirty-six—reveals many of those reasons even on a casual analysis.

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Adolf Hitler was born in 1889 in the little Austrian town of Braunau, where his father was a customs official. The atmosphere of the place was essentially German and differed very little from that of Bavarian towns just across the frontier. There are few people more typically German than these Austrians near the German border, among whom abstract and fantastic ideas of Pan-Germanism have always flourished. There is, then, very little reality in the taunt that Hitler is a foreigner, even if he assumed German nationality only in 1932. Young Adolf went to school in Linz, where his history master was expounding fantastic theories of the superiority of the German race. It is said that Hitler succumbed entirely to the influence of this energetic teacher and never quite succeeded in freeing himself from it.

Both parents died when Adolf Hitler was sixteen years of age. He had failed at school and had spent two years loafing at home; playing with the idea of becoming a painter. Lung trouble prevented him from hard work, and he failed to gain admission either to the Art Academy or to an architectural school. Indeed, his father died with the conviction that the idle son was good for nothing and would come to nothing.

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Hitler then spent several years in Vienna reading, visiting theatres, and the opera, and joining in the great game of the Vienna intellectuals: talking, talking, talking. When his money was spent, he had to take occasional work as a house painter's hand. This was the period in which the foundation was laid to his political career. From the description in his own autobiography, it can be realized that he suffered agonies of injured pride by having to work side by side with common proletarians. Class feeling was very strong in the old Austrian State, and the son of a State official felt worlds above the ordinary workman. When his fellow workers, who must have sensed the contemptuous reserve in the young man, insisted on breaking down his pretence by compelling him to join their union, he refused—and was promptly forced out of his job. There was nothing unnatural in this episode: Hitler appeared on the site of the building with white collar and carefully pressed, if threadbare trousers, telling all and sundry that he was "really an artist, and only working there to tide over bad times". That attitude is resented wherever workers take pride in their work. The ambitious youth, however, was incapable of suspecting that he might be in the wrong. He immediately jumped at the idea that the Viennese

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workers were engaged in a deadly class war which was as dangerous to the nation as it had proved damaging to himself. The seed was laid for a sweeping hatred of "Marxism".

When he was about twenty, Hitler started to learn architecture. He took a growing interest in political activities and, moved by his resentful hatred of Socialism, listened to those mystical Nationalists who were even then preaching that the German race must fight for its life against the invasions of the Jews and Slavs who were over-running the Austrian capital. Considering the time and place, there was a good deal of healthy reaction in these ideas, a reaction against the young Nationalism of the various Slav populations of the disintegrating Austrian Empire, and against the crowding in of gifted Jews from the East. Hitler, with his single-track mind and haphazard education, took for eternal truth what was an ephemeral tendency. When he emigrated to Munich in 1912, he was already a budding politician, though his strange ideas gained hardly more than good-humoured sufferance from the solid and sensible Bavarians.

When the war broke out, the Austrian joined up with his friends in the Bavarian Infantry. He fought in the front line, was wounded, and promoted

corporal; for some mysterious reason that was the end of his promotion, although he was afterwards attached to the staff, and got the Iron Cross, first class. Towards the end of the war, he was nearly blinded as the result of gas poisoning. For weeks his weakened body fought against death, while his mind became sharpened with the unnatural brilliance of poisonous intoxication.

All through the war, Hitler had kept up his aloofness, just as he had done on the building site at Vienna. The men in his company regarded him as slightly mad and left him very much to himself, where he was happiest. When the solitary man came home from hospital, the revolution was over, but its second wave was in full swing at Munich. Hitler remained with his regiment and threw himself with great energy into the turmoil of political discussions. The fact that—in these early days of the Republic—common people were wielding the power and showed a swaggering sense of their own importance was quite sufficient to make Hitler a bitter enemy of the new state. He soon discovered that he had a great advantage over most of his opponents in debate. Whereas all the others were trying desperately to find landmarks in the stormy sea of universal confusion, Hitler calmly returned to

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his pre-war ideas and adapted them to the new situation, as far as he troubled to study it. Germany was defeated—the Jews were to blame. The country was breaking up—the Socialists were responsible. The people were starving—international finance, which had contrived the Treaty of Versailles, was behind it. It was all very simple. There are many great men in this world who derive their success from the fact that their minds are not troubled by thinking out their own ideas. Hitler is of that type. His receptive brain was highly sensitive to ideas which fitted into his ambitions. Once he had taken up an idea, he enlarged it to staggering proportions, and fought for it with all the irrational energy of his temperament. Thus he had taken up and inflated the Austrian ideas of anti-Semitism, Pan-Germanism, and State Socialism. Thus he took up the plan for a National Socialism which he found ready-made in the small "German Workers' Party" when he joined it as member number seven. Untroubled by the agonies of original thinking, he developed a complete, consistent scheme of society on the few simple lines which he had decided to adopt. He was conscious of the advantage which one-sidedness gives to a man of action. He refused to see things in perspective. He would have nothing to do with

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common sense, which recognizes a certain amount of good in all men and in every scheme. Utterly free from the limitations of what the English call a sense of humour, he could become a fanatic. He has never denied that this was his express ambition. Seeing the other side is a handicap in violent times. Hitler was driven by glowing patriotism and burning ambition; the evils, real or imaginary, which he wanted to destroy, were largely due to the inertia of men who would admit that almost everything had its justification as long as no shooting occurred. The Liberal Republic was conceived and led in this spirit of "relativity". Hitler was the only man in Germany who was one-sided enough to cut through it.

Hear him speak at a public meeting: his voice raised to angry shouting from beginning to end, his right fist continually banging his open left hand, a lock of his straight hair falling on his brow, large drops of sweat running down his face. He has learnt that an orator should not make more than one point at a time. His point is the National Socialist programme, and he expounds it again and again with a wealth of repetition only varied by the insertion of popular proverbs and quotations from text-book poets. Whatever he says leads to the promise that a

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great future is dawning. In a Germany downcast by pessimism, confused by lack of leadership, and worn out by daily misery, Hitler is the only prophet of hope.

Adolf Hitler has come into power by methods which he had developed for purposes of political warfare and perfected in his struggle with the Communists. He found those methods useful in consolidating the power which he acquired, but neither Hitler nor his immediate lieutenants have any of the traditions of government, high policy, or administration. The lack of previous experience, and freedom from the trammels of inherent traditions, are sources of strength as well as weakness. It is well to remember that revolutionary architects everywhere—in England Cromwell, in France during the revolution, and in Russia Lenin—were all men without previous experience of government.

Hitler has already undergone an amazing change since he jumped from the crest of a tremendous wave of opposition to the most responsible position in the State. He shouts no longer. He is ready to take advice from experienced councillors. He consults even some of his opponents; his personal regard for Dr. Brüning, the former leader of the Catholic Party, has led to many conferences between the two men. The

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realities of the international position have not failed to impress the National Socialist leader. He did not hesitate long before he threw most of his former schemes for German foreign policy overboard and adopted a conciliatory attitude. His capacity for grasping administrative details is said to be remarkable. Experienced politicians who feared that Hitler would soon smash the whole machinery of government find that he adapts himself smoothly and efficiently to traditional methods. Foreign visitors who have met him after the excitement of the revolution had worn off are impressed with his quiet earnestness, and come away with the feeling that this fanatic is really developing into a statesman.

During the growth of the National Socialist movement the character of its leader developed unexpected qualities. The job made the man. While the audiences of his countless public meetings were still admiring the firebrand with his thunderous sermon against corruption, weakness, and unbelief, the men who met him in secret conference felt the influence of a powerful determination and a steady eye for political realities. Industrialists who asked him to explain his programme in their meetings were surprised to find a sensible, matter-of-fact speaker whose

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ideas they regarded as essentially sound, if still immature. By the time he had become the leader of the largest party in the state, even his public speeches began to show signs of moderation, though his furious shouting and the vulgarity of his expressions misled many observers in a country where education is valued above everything. He knew what he wanted—a dictatorship for his party—and he was determined not to be content with less. But he had long realized that great things are easier said than done.

For all these changes, Hitler has stood firmly to the main lines of his scheme. It is impossible to argue with him on the questions of anti-Semitism or anti-Marxism. He will not hear one word in favour of Austria as long as she refuses to come into line with the National Socialist scheme of her greater neighbour. He is ready to flare up in burning hatred against any person, high or low, who dares to stand in his way. But the leader can now afford to adopt a quiet manner, for his lieutenants will see to it that the flame of the revolution does not burn out. Hitler is now, as he was from childhood, a solitary figure, aloof from social contacts. He has become the object of almost religious adoration for the millions of his followers. Like Lenin, he is now

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the divine protector of the revolution. One wonders whether his name will be embalmed, as Lenin's body was, and serve to create a legend beneath which history is buried.

It is a strange team which worked with Adolf Hitler for the establishment of National Socialist power, and which is now holding the responsibility for the great experiment. Some of its leading members, who are playing a decisive part in the revolution now in progress, are almost as important for its cause and success as Hitler himself. There is, in the first place, Captain¹ Hermann Goering, Prime Minister of Prussia, and Speaker of the Reichstag. A broad-shouldered, powerful figure, with great physical strength. A man of terrific will-power and fierce temper, capable of almost inhuman hatred and brutality. The only cool realist among the mystics of the "inner circle". A frank, crude man of quick decisions, and many friendships. A brilliant conversationalist. His photograph adorns the bedroom walls of millions of romantic girls.

Born in 1883, the son of a high Bavarian official, he entered the army early, and got his first commission in 1912. At the outbreak of war he joined the air-force and soon became one of its most famous mem-

¹ Goering was recently made General by government decree.

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bers. Goering's name was held in respect and awe second only to that of Richthofen. After the war, he left the army as Captain, having been decorated with the Pour-le-Mérit, the highest military order of Imperial Germany. He then joined the Swedish Commercial Airlines, but gave up flying after his marriage to a Swedish lady in 1922. Returning to Munich, he was immensely impressed by Hitler's personality, joined the National Socialist Party, and was immediately made chief of the Storm Detachments. In the famous insurrection of 1923, Goering walked next to Marshal Ludendorff into the guns of the police and was severely wounded. Escaping arrest, he went to Italy and was the first of Hitler's men to make contact with the Fascist movement there. Eight years later, he was officially sent to Rome as Hitler's envoy to Mussolini and to the Pope, a mission which was highly important for the further progress of the National Socialist movement. Again two years later, in the spring of 1933, he reappeared in Rome as the representative of the triumphant National Socialist revolution and was greeted with military honours. Yet his success this time was not equal to the previous occasion. If reports can be trusted, Goering received a stern scolding from Mussolini who viewed with alarm the

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moral isolation into which the National Socialist excesses were manœuvring Germany.

One who has visited Captain Goering in the small flat which he occupied until official standing led him to choose more opulent surroundings describes the remarkable atmosphere of his study: behind the desk-chair hangs an ancient German executioner's sword on a cloth of red and gold. The study is lit by enormous church candles standing all over the room in elaborate silver candlesticks. The walls are decorated with pictures of King Frederick II, Bismarck, Mussolini, the Kaiser, the Crown Prince, and Baron Richthofen, the airman. In front of the desk is a large picture of Napoleon, which the captain is said to contemplate often when he is in need of inspiration. Mingled with this strange collection are many paintings by the hand of the late Mrs. Goering—quiet, respectable flower-pieces.

What a mixture of childishness and terrific ambition! Does it not lead one to think of a schoolboy wanting to be an Italian condottiere? But there is nothing schoolboyish in the man himself. His face never moves when he gives an order which he knows will mean a death-sentence to someone. His powerful voice shakes with savage hatred when he speaks of his enemies, who are numerous. If this man is a

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romantic, his is the romance of sheer power. "Where men chop wood shavings will fly," he replies ironically to the queries of foreigners who are profoundly shocked at the bloody excesses of the "first phase".

For all his brutality, Captain Goering is one of the most capable men of Hitler's team. He is the great chucker-out of the movement, the man who will remove every obstacle and find a way out of every deadlock—if you ask no questions. He is the engine that pulls the Nazi train. There are many in Germany to-day who ask themselves anxiously whether the driver is strong enough to pull the brake lever should the engine run away.

A different figure altogether is Dr. Joseph Goebbels, the minister for propaganda and public enlightenment. He is the most effective speaker of the movement next to Hitler himself. But his spell-binding is of a different kind. This small, fragile man with the enormous head, the dark hair and the charming manners has a silky voice and a sleek turn of phrase. A typical intellectual, he derives obvious pleasure from a finely chiselled sentence or a resounding headline. His is the job of expounding the views of his chief, and he does it with brilliant versatility of expression. No better description can be given of his present role in the new state than that

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furnished by himself: he is Hitler's torch-bearer.

Joseph Goebbels was born in 1897 in a small town in the Rhineland, where his father was a works' manager. His mother is the daughter of a blacksmith. As the son had a crippled foot, he was early destined to enter a learned profession. After studying—as is the custom in Germany—at many universities in succession, he graduated as a doctor of philosophy at Heidelberg. There he succumbed to the influence of the brilliant Jewish teacher Friedrich Gundolf who was forcefully expounding the mystical doctrines of Stefan George, that great old poet whose infectious arrogance poisoned the minds of so many of his younger and weaker countrymen. The abstract detachment and profound solemnity of George, and his follower Gundolf, became impudent superiority and hollow pompousness in the young men to whom they unwittingly imparted the art of appearing clever.

Back in the Rhineland Goebbels joined the staff of a local newspaper and soon distinguished himself by a fertile imagination and a brilliant, if bombastic style. He wrote several patriotic plays and began to speak in public. Thus he was "discovered" by Gregor Strasser, one of Hitler's earliest collaborators, who had come to the Rhineland to found

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branches of the National Socialist party. Goebbels was then swimming in two currents at once, both of which were attracting increasing numbers of young Germans: he had socialist ideas, and he covered them with the nationalist sentiments which were almost inescapable in the Rhineland under the moral pressure of the French occupation. Strasser himself held strongly socialist views, and that was the platform on which the two men met. Goebbels joined the party and was soon promoted to higher posts, as the leaders recognized his exceptional ability for agitation.

For a time Goebbels regarded himself as a follower of Gregor Strasser rather than of Hitler. When Strasser revolted against the leader in 1925, Goebbels went with him. Together they gave the National Socialist Party in the north and west—where Strasser had recruited the movement largely from working men—a definitely socialist turn. They dropped anti-Semitism and anti-Marxism. Many socialist and communist workers joined them. It seemed as if the National Socialist Party had definitely become a party of the Left. Goebbels was the first to conceive the scheme of National Socialist “works’ cells” in rivalry to the similar procedure of the communists. These cells were later to develop

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into the most powerful section of the Nazi organization, and even to-day remain the stronghold of the socialist tendencies within the movement.

Goebbels himself deserted Strasser when Hitler was regaining control over the party. He became one of Hitler's intimate friends, though he never ceased to be a socialist at heart. His mind was too erratic to be independent; his intelligence had not sufficient character to stick to principles. But though he was not big enough to be a leader, he was invaluable to the movement as a propagandist. Hitler appointed him chief of propaganda for the whole party and trusted him with the supervision of the development of the northern sections. It was a clever choice. Neither Hitler himself nor his Bavarian friends could have gained the confidence of the Prussian workers whose support became highly important for the eventual success of the movement. Goebbels knew far better than Hitler how to speak to working-men audiences and to rouse the enthusiasm of the young proletarian. It was Goebbels, too, who created the halo around the leader's head. He invented or discovered the legends that make up the party's elaborate system of hero worship. His paper, the Berlin *Angriff*, was turning out effective slogans by the dozen, and in

his flowery style he coined many a taunt on a political adversary which cut deeper than a dagger.

Yet when Hitler became Chancellor and the members of his team were appointed to leading posts, Goebbels was at first forgotten. Perhaps his socialist leanings made him suspect to the conservatives who had called in the Nazi leader; perhaps his sharp tongue had wounded too many who were still in high positions. It is even more likely that Hitler wished to damp the young man's temper before he trusted him with responsibility. Goebbel's pen had run away with him and he had developed an overwhelming sense of his own importance. Eventually, however, a post was created for him: the propaganda chief of the party was appointed propaganda minister of the German Reich. The young Doctor is now master over the German press, over radio, cinema, and the stage. His gifts are suitably employed; but his ambitions can hardly be satisfied. Goebbels is dreaming socialist dreams. He is a man to watch.

Wherever Hitler goes, a burly, sunburned youth is following him like a shadow. That dark-haired young sportsman is Rudolf Hess, once the leader's private secretary, and to-day the deputy-leader of the party,—destined to even greater prominence.

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Born in 1896 in Egypt, Hess came to Germany for the first time when he was fourteen years of age. He entered his father's substantial business, served in the war as an airman, and returned to Munich where he joined an anti-Jewish society. Fascinated by Hitler's oratory, he became a member of the National Socialist Party in 1921, serving in one of the first "storm detachments". After Hitler's abortive insurrection in 1923 Hess was arrested and served his sentence in the military gaol where Hitler was also confined. The leader took a liking to the cheerful, reliable youth, and the two became close friends. When the party was reconstructed in 1925 Hess was appointed adjutant and private secretary of the chief. From that time onward he followed Hitler on all his journeys, stood beside him in all public meetings, and was a silent but watchful witness in all his private conversations. When Hitler became Chancellor, Hess almost automatically assumed the position of acting leader of the party. Although he hardly ever speaks in public, he is recognized to be a power behind the throne.

Rudolf Hess is a quiet man who impresses one as trustworthy and sensible. Among a team of gifted but erratic visionaries he appears to provide an element of character and breadth of outlook the

importance of which, for the development of German policy, it is not easy to overrate. He has already been given permission to take part in all meetings of the Cabinet. There is no knowing how much further he may still go.

There is nothing uncertain about the future of Dr. Wilhelm Frick, the Minister for Home Affairs in Hitler's Cabinet. Frick is one of the oldest members of the leading group, being fifty-six, and looking more. With his close-cropped, grey hair and small, vivid eyes, his pedantic dress and pompous gait he is the typical German bureaucrat—a *Geheimrat* of the old type. Trained for the legal profession, he began his career as a solicitor for the police in Bavaria, and then spent ten years in municipal service. Being "indispensable" in his office, he did not serve in the war, and the dearth of men helped him to quick promotion. In 1917, Frick was appointed to the Munich department of police where he rose to be political adviser to the police president. It was in this position that the *Geheimrat*—who was responsible for allowing or prohibiting political meetings—came into touch with Hitler. From that time he was an invaluable help to the young party which was always on the verge of conflict with the Law.

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In November 1923, Frick attempted to use his official position to prevent the police from suppressing the Hitler rebellion. He was promptly arrested and spent five months in prison. As soon as he was released, he stood as a parliamentary candidate for the Nazi Party and was elected to the Reichstag. There his administrative experience made him indispensable to a party of young, inexperienced men. When there was a chance of getting a Nazi into the ministry of the central German state of Thuringia, Dr. Frick was pushed into the gap and became Thuringian minister for education. During the fourteen months he held this post the public received the first foretaste of Nazi policy.

One of Frick's first official acts was to prohibit the sale of that remarkable war book *All Quiet on the Western Front* by E. M. Remarque which was at that time enjoying a big sale in other parts of Germany. He then began to "cleanse" the public galleries of Weimar of all modern pictures—which he considered to be "intellectual bolshevism"—and to reform the teaching of history in the schools. Henceforward the young Thuringians learned that Germany had been viciously tricked into the war, that her armies had been victorious in the field but had been "stabbed in the back" by the treacherous

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socialists, and that the day of liberation was not far off. After introducing a compulsory school prayer on the same lines, the minister proceeded to warn the citizens against jazz music and new-fangled dances, which were altogether un-German.

To-day the fanatic Geheimrat holds one of the more powerful positions in the German cabinet. He is representative of a current which belongs intimately to the National Socialist movement yet knows nothing about its modernist, forward-looking side. Through men like Dr. Wilhelm Frick the movement is tied to pre-war reaction. But if reports be true, the ties are not very durable.

Let us present Lt.-Col. Ernst Roehm, the mystery man of the Nazi Party. Every inch a soldier, the Colonel has a healthy contempt for politics. When he got into trouble for organizing Hitler's private army, he published an autobiographical sketch under the title "The story of a traitor". Roehm was born in 1887, entered the army as a boy, and became an officer in 1908. After the war he took part in suppressing the red régime in Bavaria and organizing semi-military associations. He was one of a group of officers who welcomed the rise of Hitler's party because they hoped to use it for their own political purposes. Hitler asked him to build up his

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storm detachments, and a better man could not have been found. It was the quiet unfailing efficiency of this staff officer which made the storm troops what they were—a powerful fighting instrument in the hands of the leader. In 1924 Roehm was elected to the Reichstag, but never made a speech. His heart was with the storm troops, and soon he had become so powerful that Hitler had to get rid of him. After a few years abroad as military instructor to the Bolivian army the Colonel was recalled by Hitler in 1930 and made chief-of-staff. There was scandal about his private life, which he made worse by saying that he did not care for respectable people; but he was too valuable to be dropped on account of scandalous revelations. He continues to be a key man in the Nazi hierarchy. The public hardly know him. The inner circle, however, is well aware that at one time or another Ernst Roehm may yet stand between Hitler and disaster.

In the early days of the National Socialist movement a number of Russian emigrants played a considerable part in its development. They were still hoping for an early downfall of Bolshevism and supported all anti-communist tendencies as a matter of course. Hitler attracted them particularly by reason

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of his hostility towards the Jews. Their world had been smashed by the Soviet dictatorship which they considered to be the work of Jews. One of their ranks, Alfred Rosenberg, came to have considerable influence on Hitler himself. Born in Reval—now the capital of Esthonia, but before the war belonging to the Russian Empire—Rosenberg was of German descent. He was educated in Russia, of which his German accent still gives ample proof. In 1919 he fled from the red terror and came to Munich, where many Russian emigrants found a first refuge at that period. Rosenberg represents a strange cross between a German body and a Russian mind. Like the Russian intellectuals of Dostoevski's novels, he is capable of building up terrific theories from no more than the smoke of a chain of cigarettes. He is responsible for some of the most rigid, high-sounding, and incomprehensible theories which appear in Nazi literature. From him the movement inherited that fierce, dogmatic anti-Semitism which is so far removed from all German tradition. He sensed the prevalent feeling against the Jews, and he provided exciting theories to support it. Hitler, looking for a sword to cool his fury, became a willing disciple of the phantastic Balt. Rosenberg's theories went into the Nazi programme lock, stock and barrel. It is

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he who invented the German "urge towards the East"—but when he said that Germany must have land in the East to "colonize", he meant nothing less than a German crusade against Moscow. The National Socialist leaders are still trying unsuccessfully to digest the horse-pill which Alfred Rosenberg gave them to swallow.

Because Alfred Rosenberg was an expert in foreign policy—he knew, for example, that French policy, American finance, the British press, and Russian Bolshevism were all directed by Jews who were secretly working hand-in-hand—he was appointed chief of the Nazi "foreign department" after the revolution of 1933. Hitler made one of his rare mistakes in his choice of men when he dispatched Rosenberg to London to find out what the English were thinking, and perhaps to tell them the real truth about Germany. The curt, cynical emissary was received with cat-calls by the public and with cold showers by the politicians. His visit produced nothing but irritation and did no good to Germany's reputation abroad. But the failure of Rosenberg's first official mission turned out to be a blessing in disguise: it thoroughly disillusioned Hitler about the real position of foreign affairs, and it gave him an opportunity to subdue—perhaps only tem-

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porarily—the sinister Balt who is the evil genius of National Socialism. Hitler's Reichstag speech was the first sign that he was throwing off the spell which Rosenberg had cast over the party. At the first impact with the realities of foreign policy the visionary schemes had evaporated like so much hot air, and little more remained of the "urge towards the East" than an assurance to the Western powers that the new German régime was an impenetrable bulwark against Bolshevism. But Rosenberg's influence has gone into the roots of the movement, and if the leader could disabuse himself of it, it does not mean that his followers will be equally quick to see through it. It is a problem of vital importance for Germany's future whether the Russian element, represented by Alfred Rosenberg, will retain its hold over the minds of the National Socialist masses. Germany has a Janus-head: it looks towards East and West at the same time. The world has seen only the Western face since 1919—now the head is turning.

Among the lesser stars of the Nazi heaven Dr. Gottfried Feder, the author of the party's programme, is perhaps the best known. A steady, quiet man, always ready to enter into an interminable argument about economic questions; the centre

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of his world is the problem of money. He will solve all problems with the key of his monetary theory, losing his temper if his opponent is stupid enough not to see his point. The trouble with this world is purely and simply that we are all in the servitude of the interest system. Once usury has vanished, all will be well. Like many monetary cranks, Feder is an engineer by profession, and a very clever engineer he is said to have been before he devoted all his time to political propaganda. Gottfried Feder is the son of a high Bavarian official and comes from a very gifted family. His grandmother was a Greek lady. As a student, he entered a smart "corps" and fought many duels; in one of these he was severely wounded about the head. For this reason he was exempted from war service and had ample time to work out his scheme. On the day before the Armistice he published a "manifesto" demanding that the tyranny of the interest system should be smashed. He began to lecture on his theory, and soon found his first public platform in the small "German Workers' Party" which Anton Drexler, a Bavarian blacksmith, had founded, and which was to become the nucleus of the National Socialist movement. When Hitler joined the party, it was Feder's scheme which attracted him most, and although the party

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has undergone many changes since those early days, Feder remained its economic adviser and is even now Secretary of State in the Ministry of Economic Affairs—a post of great importance for the guidance of economic policy.

While Feder is the party's expert on financial questions, Walter Darré is its adviser on agricultural matters. In contrast to the visionary engineer, Darré—who is only thirty-eight—has had real experience in his field. He was born in the Argentine, where his father was a German merchant and cattle breeder. Young Darré learned a good deal about large-scale farming from his father, and when he came to Germany, he was soon sent on an official journey of enquiry to the Baltic countries. Like most people born and educated in overseas countries he inclined to a narrow nationalism, and what he heard from the Baltic barons whose estates he visited had a decisive influence on his mind. He wrote a book with the revealing title *The Peasantry as the source of strength of the Nordic race*, and Alfred Rosenberg's idea of "colonizing the East" found in Darré an enthusiastic adherent. He joined Hitler a few years ago and became his chief propagandist among the peasants, whom he promised relief from the crushing burden of debts. He believes in the

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strengthening of agriculture as against industry and trade; and as Minister for Agriculture in Hitler's cabinet he will doubtless work on that "new balance" which is to make Germany largely self-sufficient in point of foodstuffs.

Another typical "overseas man" in the Nazi inner circle is Dr. Ernst Hanfstaengl, Hitler's liaison officer for the foreign press. His father had gone to New York to manage the branch of the family business in Fifth Avenue—the famous art reproduction firm—and married a Miss Sedgwick-Heine, the niece of General John Sedgwick, of civil war fame. The son was born in 1887 and educated at Harvard university from 1905 to 1909, when he graduated. He spent two years in Germany and returned to the States in 1911, remaining in New York throughout the war. Returning to Germany in 1921, he was aghast at the change that had come over the prosperous, pleasant country which he had left ten years before. He knew nothing of the agonies which the Germans had gone through. He simply resented the disappearance of the pre-war glory and was ready to believe that some detestable gang of traitors had brought about the downfall. When he met Hitler in 1923, he had already made up his mind that the Jews were to blame; Hitler told him

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how the damage could be repaired, and he joined the party at once. Hanfstaengl, as one of the few men of the movement who knew the world and could speak a foreign language, was made "press manager" and charged with propaganda in foreign countries. In that capacity many foreign journalists have met the tall, dark man and heard the deep voice expounding the ideas of the leader in quaint phrases and a smiling, off-hand manner. They were told that Hitler was not in the least worried by the hostile attitude of the foreign press; he knew—and he, Hanfstaengl, had been able to tell him a thing or two—that the big newspapers everywhere were in the hands of Jews who naturally squealed at the fate of their German brothers but would soon enough be swept away by similar movements in their own countries.

It remains to mention one who is in disgrace to-day but may rise to great prominence to-morrow; Gregor Strasser. A year ago he was Hitler's rival for the leadership of the National Socialist Party, and when General von Schleicher negotiated with him for the party's participation in the government he came very near to splitting it from top to bottom. Strasser, who resented Hitler's hesitation, offered to join the Cabinet himself, confident that a large

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section of the party would support him. But the leader smashed the intrigue, and Strasser had to go into retirement. He is quiet now, but he has not yet said his last word. Whenever his name is mentioned, there is a raising of eyebrows and an understanding twinkle full of meaning. His hour is not far off.

Gregor Strasser is the only one of the Nazi leaders whose character and career are free of curve or break. He is neither a neurotic nor a frontier man, and he hides no secret personal resentment. He is also the only leading Nazi with a sense of humour. The fair giant with the voice of a lion and the Falstaff laughter is solid and sound at heart. He is neither artistic, nor does he feel himself to be a misunderstood genius. His outlook is decidedly provincial, but his character is straight and simple. His manner is that of a robust Bavarian shopkeeper—which he is. A chemist by trade, he mixed medicines in his little shop at Landshut until he sold it to provide the party with funds. Joining Hitler in 1921, he was soon made a sub-leader of the storm detachments and was one of the first Nazi deputies in the Bavarian diet. He developed a remarkable gift for organization, and soon rose to prominence. Being elected to the Reichstag in 1924, he became Hitler's "branch manager" in Berlin. While the

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leader was still cherishing ideas of direct action, Strasser became the leader of the "legalist" section of the party.

In 1925 Hitler's fortunes were at a low ebb. He had failed to overthrow the Bavarian government; he had lost the storm troops after his break with Colonel Roehm; and the revival of trade took much wind from the sails of the extremist parties. It was Strasser who rebuilt the party with untiring energy—but he built it for himself, not for Hitler. While the movement was fizzling out in Bavaria, Strasser succeeded in spreading it in the north and west of the country. National Socialism, in a broad sense, was at that time becoming very popular. Many groups and parties, mostly offsprings of the socialist and communist parties, were attempting to unite Nationalism and Socialism in various ways. Strasser—supported by his brother Otto and the young Dr. Goebbels—laid the accent on socialism, abandoned Hitler's anti-Jewish ideas, and developed a mainly socialist party. His Berlin organ, the *Workers' News*, went very far in its sympathy towards Communism. In 1928 it was possible to read in this paper sentences like this: "We respect the fighters of the red front. True, we have ourselves helped to rout them, but we realize now that we were both deceived."

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The new Nationalist Communism became the domain of Otto Strasser, Gregor's younger brother, who founded an independent group called the "black front". He is now in exile, and his party is suppressed. Hitler stamped on the rebellion as soon as he had regained control over the southern section of the movement. He forced Goebbels to desert the Strassers and successfully smothered the powerful rival by building up an organization of his own in the north. Gregor Strasser had to give in and served Hitler loyally for a time. Many people within and without the party regarded him as its real leader, while Hitler was widely thought to be only its "drummer"—a title which he accepted himself. Events proved that this view was wrong. Yet it is even now hard to believe that Gregor Strasser should remain for long outside the magic circle of power. He is the hope of the socialists in the Nazi movement. If they should get out of control, his is the only hand which can curb them.

XII

TWILIGHT—OR NEW DAWN?

The National Socialist régime did not come into power by means of a revolution. Hitler joined a coalition government because his party was the largest in the country. Democracy carried itself *ad absurdum* by voting for its own extinction. It was only in its second phase that the régime—constitutionally established and confirmed in its power—developed into a revolution. But from that time onwards it began to move at breakneck speed.

One party after another was either forcibly suppressed or compelled to dissolve itself. The great organizations which had played a powerful part in German politics for several generations broke up like empty shells. In less than six months Hitler had achieved his primary ambition: the “totalitarian” state in which there is only one party. That party—the National Socialist—exercises complete control over the whole field of public life. It has thrown

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open its doors to the majority of those whom it deprived of their independent political formations. Thus the Nationalists, the Stahlhelm, the Catholics and others have been frankly invited to join the victorious party, though they will have to undergo a period of "probation". The "old guard" of the Nazis has been given special privileges which will enable them to retain the leadership firmly in their hands; but the fact that the basis of government has been enormously widened cannot fail to have important consequences. After all, each of the defunct parties stood for a definite political and spiritual outlook. The National Socialist Party, having admitted so many different currents into its sphere, will have to assimilate them—and is bound to receive profound impressions in the process. Hitler has succeeded to a staggering extent in uniting the German nation. He can count on a wider support than any German government since the war, and though tremendous pressure, culminating in systematic terror, has been used to achieve this state, it is now widely felt to have been a necessity which was overdue for years.

The unification of the political, economic, and social formations of the German people is intended to prepare the ground for a planned national or-

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ganization on an unprecedented scale. There is undoubtedly a great determination alive in Germany to work out a new society and a new faith. Even Germans who have suffered under the ruthless hand of the Nazi revolution, and many who are deeply shocked at the barbaric methods used in the struggle, are reluctantly impressed by the universal feeling that a new dawn is breaking. In any case, it is felt by growing sections of the people that a purely negative attitude cannot lead anywhere—as the cases of Red Russia and Fascist Italy have shown in the experience of our generation. There are to-day in the ranks of the National Socialist movement many whose outlook is considerably broader than that of the leaders. If many of Germany's finest brains are defying Hitler, others of equal ability and culture have agreed to serve him. It is possible that the "third phase" of the revolution—the phase of constructive work—will bring in its train considerable relaxation of the iron rule which has characterized the former stages, though it will be very difficult to combine the Nazi scheme with what was called the *Rechtsstaat*—a state based on equality of all citizens before the law. The cardinal problem of the moment is whether the enormous dislocation caused by the process of unifi-

cation has not destroyed the chances of a successful reconstruction. It is possible to pursue "planning" to the point where there is nothing left to "plan". And a rapid deterioration of the economic and financial situation would materially alter the prospects of the great experiment.

Let us examine the possible developments on the strength of present indications. In the economic field, Germany has lost faith in intense foreign trade and will increasingly concentrate on the development of her home market. Having for the moment cut adrift from the powerful moorings of her foreign indebtedness, she is free to work out a new economic balance by putting more people on the land and improving the position of agriculture. There is among the National Socialists a strong tendency towards "*autarkie*", meaning the deliberate isolation of each country, with a bare minimum of such foreign trade as is necessary to supplement national resources. These ideas, however, have undergone a profound change since Hitler took office. It has now been realized that Germany, with her great concentration of industry, cannot renounce her foreign trade without condemning a large section of her population to starvation. "Autarkie" will remain a tendency rather than become a definite plan. But

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even so, the economic policy of Hitler's Government is directed towards creating as much employment as possible by the development of the home market. The settlement of unemployed workers on the land is one of the most important actions contemplated. The strengthening of the small craftsmen and traders as against big industrial concerns and departmental stores serves a similar purpose. In addition, there is a campaign to induce women to give up commercial and clerical work for domestic activities, in order to make room for men. The State has already created a special fund out of which loans are given without interest to women who desire to marry, but cannot do so for financial reasons, on condition that they leave commercial employment, and undertake not to take a job again until the loan is repaid. The State will also finance important public works likely to be of lasting advantage to the country; large schemes of land amelioration, road building, and the construction of canals have already been taken in hand. Although the word "inflation" has a terrible sound to the ear of the German who has experienced the bitter consequences of "inflation" running wild, a certain degree of financial expansion must be carried out to make all these schemes possible.

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At the same time, the powerful contraction of national life, which has found visible expression in the new centralized constitution of Germany, will be extended to every field of social activity. The twenty-eight protestant churches have already, after a fierce struggle, been compelled to amalgamate into a single body under the leadership of a Reich bishop. Education is to be based exclusively on the principal that patriotic and disciplined citizens are more valuable, even with limited erudition, than highly knowledgeable individuals without that stern submission to the national purpose. Therefore, the teaching in schools and universities is to be deliberately one-sided, the recent history of Germany and the aims of the new nationalism being the most important subjects of education. Even in art, universal human standards are not regarded as binding. When Herr Furtwängler, the famous conductor of the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, protested against the persecution of Jewish musicians and said that he recognized no other difference but that of good and bad music, Dr. Goebbels replied in an open letter: "The difference between good and bad music is not the only one; there is a more important difference between music which has no roots in the national soil, and music which expresses

the spirit of the people. We want no more 'free' art as Liberal democracy understood it, we want art and the artist to give expression to the political spirit of the times."

The entire intellectual life of the country is in future to serve the purpose of patriotic propaganda: schools, universities, literature, art, the theatre, films, radio and the press are to be so many pipes of a single organ, played by the masters of the State. Obedience is enforced by the sternest measures of official intimidation. Every tendency which may conceivably conflict with the great simplification of minds is stamped out without regard to its intrinsic value. This was the idea underlying the symbolic burning of books which took place one evening in May on the famous Opera Square in Berlin. The German Students' Association had conducted an energetic campaign for the collection of "un-German" books from public and private libraries. They appealed to every true German to give up the works of authors who were officially regarded as demoralizing and destructive in spirit. Among these authors there were many Jews—some of them highly distinguished in science and literature, like Albert Einstein; others at least widely known all over the world for their earnestness of purpose—such as Lion

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Feuchtwanger the novelist, and Dr. Magnus Hirschfeld the psychologist, whose researches on sexual pathology are internationally recognized. Vansloads of such books had been collected by the students with or without compulsion. The action was repeated in all German cities and towns, and on the same evening all the books were burnt in great bonfires. The students were present in full force, supported by numbers of National Socialists and many curious or amused spectators. The author and title of each book was read out aloud before it was thrown into the fire among loud cheering. The government, although it was not prepared to treat the event with particular seriousness, thoroughly approved of the spirit behind it. Dr. Goebbels, the Minister for Propaganda, even made a speech at the Berlin bookburning, in which he demanded that every tendency calculated to weaken the national spirit be eradicated, so that in future the people might read only such books as strengthened their national feeling, and educated them to be patriotic, clean living and disciplined.

The episode bears a remarkable resemblance to the burning of British cloth in India at the height of Gandhi's movement. Both acts are mainly symbolic. Just as the Indian cotton burning did not

mean that no more British cotton was afterwards to be found in India, so the educated German will continue to be able to read "un-German" books. It is an exaggeration to describe this demonstration, as it has been described, as the result of a barbaric spirit hostile to real culture. First of all, a large number of the condemned books are not worth a protest. There had grown up after the war a kind of literature which knew no responsibility towards the reading public, either in common decency, or in discipline of ideas. As far as open or veiled pornography is concerned—which every recent visitor to Germany could have seen displayed on all the street bookstalls—a public revulsion of feeling had already set in. For several years, it was an important public accusation against parliamentary democracy that former governments, in their endeavour to protect the principle of complete civil liberty, never seriously interfered against this scourge.

Apart from pornography, there was a type of literature known by the term of "Berlin Intellectualism", which would discuss and criticize any movement, ideal, religion, or any other tendency under the sun with considerable brilliance but almost inhuman detachment. These authors would pro-

pound Communist theories without taking them seriously: they would attack religion without saying what they believed in; they would generally criticize every established institution in turn without recognizing even a future order. In the desperate moral and spiritual confusion into which the German people had been thrown after their sudden downfall, this nihilism was fiercely resented, not only by political opponents, but by every man who had any hope and courage left. It was hardly more than natural that with the political change, there should come a reaction against the literature which had added to the bitterness of spiritual helplessness. It was equally natural that revolutionary exuberance should extend the charge to many authors and works that were very loosely connected with the tendency described. The case of Professor Einstein stands by itself; his political inclinations, sometimes pursued with the supreme ignorance of worldly affairs that seems to be inherent in abstract scientific work, had marked him out for attack. Others had committed no crime other than the fact that they were Jews or Socialists. Thus the books of Heinrich Heine, who died a century ago, and of Karl Marx himself, were burnt with particular relish.

Two facts stand out above the foolishness of ex-

cited students: one is a decided aversion of the new German régime to any sort of independence in literature and art. It is quite in line with this development that the German Academy of Authors should have been "cleansed" of many distinguished personalities, while writers of patent mediocrity, but great patriotism, were elected in their places. The second conclusion to be drawn from the literary *auto-da-fé* is that the new German system is to be based on single-mindedness. Similar tendencies are apparent in Soviet Russia and Fascist Italy—and after all, in the Catholic Church. Certain truths held to be fundamental must be protected against criticism in any State or institution wishing to attract spiritual as well as political loyalty. The indifference of the German Republic towards the moral and spiritual well-being of the citizen had led to universal unhappiness. The German mind seems to work best and feel happiest inside a firm social organization. Though the change-over to an authoritarian State will result in a great deal of compulsion and injustice, and grave mistakes in taste, it would be unwise to conclude that German literature and science, art and music will—after a period of disturbance—be unable to regain their former distinction.

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The National Socialist idea of society has the semblance of a Spartan life. Contempt of material comforts, sacrifice of individual interests to the common good, education in a manly, soldierly spirit, are the pillars of this conception. It may seem as if these ideals are merely serving the purpose of re-establishing German military power; but as far as this ulterior motive is consciously felt it takes a secondary place in the Nazi scheme. Nevertheless, if they should succeed in overcoming class distinctions to any considerable extent, and in conditioning a large section of the people for proud poverty and willing obedience, the military value of that achievement could not easily be overrated. And if ever international trade should revive in anything like its former intensity, the competitive power of German industry would be greatly enhanced by the existence of a working population content with low wages and long hours of labour.

It is the intention of the National Socialist Party not to call a halt to the revolution until its position as the only party in the State has become unassailable. Its programme is exclusive in the highest degree. Having destroyed all the rival parties, movements and groups, it will continue to strengthen its own organization. With the machinery of the

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State in its hands, it holds sufficient power to suppress any serious attempt at opposition for some time. Yet it is important to review the possibilities of a reaction. Where are the dangers threatening the Nazi régime? Where are the starting-points of potential opposition?

There is no organized force in Germany outside the control of the government party. The Stahlhelm and the other nationalist "fighting groups" have been compelled to accept the Nazi leadership. The arm of the party extends into the last corner of political and social life, and it is determined to break down even modest formations which might conceivably become the nucleus of a counter-revolution. The Socialists are broken not only in their organization but in their spirit. Some of them have joined the National Socialist movement; many others have ceased to hope for a lead from the old Socialist formations which were shown to be hollow when the first charge of the enemy wiped them out in horrible confusion. There are still many Socialists left who remain true to the old convictions, but they have neither an organization nor a leader. The attempt of the discredited Socialist politicians to form a new centre of opposition at Prague is bound to fail because these men

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have lost the confidence of their former followers.

It is different with the German Communists. The larger part of those five millions who voted for the Communist Party in 1932 have retired into cautious silence. They were never convinced Communists, but merely wanted to express their resentment against existing economic conditions. Even before the appointment of Hitler there were hardly more than half a million organized Communists. These men were, however, thoroughly trained and educated, and their determination probably exceeded even that of the Nazis. Those of their numbers who are alive and free have remained unbroken under the fierce persecution of the new régime, and although their party has been suppressed, their press abolished, and their meetings prohibited, they continue to be a force to be reckoned with—especially if at some later date the Communist tendencies in the Nazi movement should break out and lead to a split.

Of all other political concentrations, only the remnants of the broken Roman Catholic Party and the Nationalists still count for anything in Germany. Hitler has completely destroyed their organizations, but both of them represent sections of the German people which no ruler has yet been able to disregard

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with impunity. Here are the breeding grounds of a potential opposition. In Western Germany, where Catholicism is very strong, the power of National Socialism has so far been unable to get beneath the surface. In the East, where the Nationalist landholders exert great influence, each official step towards the new Socialism results in a hardening of spirit which will inevitably develop into open hostility. Both the Catholic Church and the landholders have great reserves of power which they would not hesitate to use against Hitler should he attempt to trespass too far on their grounds. In the Southern States, federalist feelings are gradually re-emerging now that the unifying enthusiasm of the revolution is wearing off; resentment against "dictation from Berlin", is becoming a source of serious trouble to the Government. This array of possibilities of reaction would not be complete without a thoughtful glance at the army. Will it continue to support the Government after it has dropped all pretence of a coalition with the Nationalists? Will it not resent, as the Italian army resented, the continuance and consolidation of a rival military force which will, as the private army of the ruling party, in many ways hold advantages over the regular soldiers? Hitler has already found it necessary to

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warn his "troops" at a conference of the leaders of storm detachments that they, the "army of political soldiers of the German revolution", must never aspire to supersede the regular army or compete with it. The Reichswehr alone was "the nation's bearer of arms". The problem may become even more important when, in accordance with a "disarmament" convention, popular conscription is re-introduced in Germany, and recruits of varied political opinions enter the ranks of the force. It is not easy to foresee the course of events; but it is a fact of importance that the Reichswehr remains—with the police—a powerful armed body outside the organization of the National Socialist Party.

Even more doubtful is the future of the National Socialist Party itself. It will remain intact as long as there is an enemy to be fought, but will it remain so after the party has become identified with the State, and settled down to constructive work? Hitler's movement has drawn on many classes and persuasions for its members. Previous crises have shown that only the immense prestige of the leader himself could keep so many conflicting interests together. It is true that the reputation of the leader has vastly increased since he became Chancellor. Yet if the powerful cross-currents in his party are subdued by

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loyalty and discipline, they are nevertheless in existence. As time goes on, the pace of the revolution will be too fast for some, and too slow for others. It is from the inside of his movement that Hitler has to fear the greatest danger. In particular, the extreme Socialist wing of the party which has its stronghold in the National Socialist works cell organization and in many sections of the storm detachments, is a possible nucleus of a future rebellion.

So far Hitler has contrived to keep the crusading spirit of his movement in the forefront of public attention. His followers, particularly the young, regard him with feelings akin to religious adoration. For many simple men and women of the lower middle-class, the peasantry, and even the working-class, Hitler is a prophet, a Messiah, a new Mahomet, against whom no word may be said, nor a hand raised without certain punishment from heaven. Yet it is not in the German character to retain such intense feelings for any length of time. Reason may reappear, and with reason comes fighting.

No revolutionary Government has ever retained its power—except in Soviet Russia—without gaining recognition abroad. The Russians are an un-

travelled people, illiterate in their vast majority, and for centuries have been accustomed to be ruled by brute force. The Germans are deeply conscious of foreign nations; they have very receptive minds, and have always taken intense interest in events abroad. Since the war, travelling in other countries has, for obvious reasons, become less general than it was before, and much of what has recently happened in Germany is the result of this isolation. At the same time, a flood of foreign books, plays, and films has swept Germany. A sufficient number of Germans have been abroad, or followed the activities of other countries to make them extremely sensitive to either praise or criticism from outside. The moral isolation into which Hitler's government has steered Germany, largely through the unnecessary excesses of its followers, is deeply felt by the mass of the German people. Even though the press may be muzzled, and reports from foreign countries severely censored, the series of diplomatic defeats which Germany has recently experienced has not passed unnoticed. Germany is not a country which can, in its present condition, hold out against the hostility of the world. Italian support is not sufficient—and not sufficiently wholehearted—to make up for the stern hostility of the Anglo-Saxon

nations. Internal reconstruction is dependent, not only on external peace, but on the sympathy of at least a part of the outside world. If Hitler continues to suffer one defeat after another in his foreign policy his prestige at home is bound to be seriously weakened.

A comparison with Italian Fascism may serve to show both the strength and the weakness of the German régime. After the successful *coup d'état* in 1922, the Fascists were for more than three years occupied with breaking up rival parties and organizations. The methods employed were hardly milder than those used in Germany to-day; the language spoken was no wit less grandiloquent. It was only after four or five years of fighting for absolute power, and of breaking down resistance, that the construction of the Fascist State could really begin. There were periods when the toughs of the "fighting line", called "squadristi", got completely out of hand; there were highly critical situations in the relations between the regular army and the Fascist militia; there was a period when nationalist excitement was deliberately whipped up against foreign "enemies" in order to ease the domestic tension; and there were repeated economic crises, accompanied by serious revolts against the régime.

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Even now, after eleven years, foreign visitors to Italy who speak Italian and live among the people cannot escape the universal feeling of watchfulness and intimidation even among convinced supporters of the Fascist Government. Yet there is not the slightest doubt that Fascism and its leader are firmly established at home as well as abroad, and that nothing short of war will unseat them.

Will Hitler and National Socialism succeed equally well? Will they be able to break the spirit of opposition as they have broken its organizations? Will they reconcile foreign opinion in time, as Mussolini has done? The answer is not easy. The Italian example shows, no doubt, how difficult it is for any opposition to become powerful once it has lost the right of assembly and organization, a free press, and any chance of obtaining arms; it shows also that world opinion has a short memory, and that its condemnation of terror and cruelty can be replaced by respect for achievements after these have become visible. On this reasoning Hitler has a long run before him. But if the position of the two Fascist countries shows certain similarities, there are also marked differences. Three points stand out, in particular, which make it unwise to carry the comparison too far.

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Firstly, Germany's foreign situation, as has been said before, is vastly more vulnerable than that of Italy. While the latter could well afford to be isolated for a time in the knowledge that the Anglo-Saxon countries regarded her growing strength as a wholesome curb on French aspirations, Germany finds nearly all the Western world ready to form a common front against her new nationalism. France and Poland are openly hostile, Russia is estranged, Britain prepared to take the side of France, and America at least sore at the loss of her loans and shocked by the chance of another European conflagration, while Italian support can hardly go beyond a modest degree. Whatever Germany's future military strength, she will have to sit still until she has broken this iron ring around her—a most unlikely event.

Secondly, Hitler has begun his experiment at a time when the economic crisis has already devastated Germany's resources and offers little hope of an early trade revival—while Mussolini ran into a boom soon after he had come to power. For a while, of course, revolutionary enthusiasm will override economic discontent, but if another year should pass without a noticeable relief in the depression, the Nazi Government's position may be seriously

endangered. That possibility is all the greater as Germany—and that is our third point of difference—possesses certain groups of economic interests vastly more powerful than anything Mussolini had to contend with. The industrialists, for example, represent a force such as Italy, with her small and scattered industry, has never had. Their leaders have been sternly subdued during the first onrush of the Nazi revolution, but already economic necessity has forced the government to call many of them into its counsels and guarantee to the rest a certain degree of independence. The industrial workers have seen their organizations destroyed, but their trade-union feeling, which was perhaps stronger than anywhere in the world, does not seem to be broken. They represent, even without associations and mouthpieces, a solid force whose solidarity of interest may yet survive the death of "Marxism". Lastly, while Italy's powerful landholding aristocracy was broken and their estates divided long before the beginning of the present century, the German landowners are still at the height of their power. Their representatives are numerous in the government and the administration. They practically rule entire provinces. While their attempt, last year, to rule the whole country was bound to fail,

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they would be formidable adversaries if their present annoyance with the modernist tendencies of the Nazi movement should grow into open hostility. All these tendencies, however, will not become clearly visible for some time, and it is too early to forecast how and where the brake will be applied.

For the immediate future, attention must be directed rather to those tendencies which are expressed in the grim chorus chanted at a recent demonstration of National Socialist "storm troopers" in the Ruhr district: "Hitler, give us bread—or we will go red!"